

**North Powder City Council Meeting**  
**March 6, 2023**  
**7PM City Hall**

Attendance: Mayor John Frieboes, Councilors Logan McCrae, Jeff Grende, Lindsey Thompson, Cody Anderson, Justin Wright and Vicki Townsend, City Recorder Beth Wendt, Public Works Director Rick Lawyer.

Barbara Weeks, Jeff & Nanci Klein, Jeff & Wynn Nielsen, Barry Princevalle, Mike Schoeningh, Shiloe Weston, Jake Jones, Donna Beverage, Shorty Schwehr, Joyce Lawyer.

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

**Public Comment:** Barry Princevalle still has a water situation. He hadn't seen anyone from the City since the last meeting and didn't think anyone was looking into his problem. John assured him that it wasn't being ignored but we've been waiting for the weather to clear so we can flush hydrants. He didn't realize Barry wanted someone to actually come to his house. Barry will get in touch with John to schedule a time to go to his house.

Jake Jones noted that he comes from a water system background. He commented that the phosphate injection rate along with the chlorine should be tracked throughout the system. That will tell if the phosphate is doing its job on the iron manganese. The new reservoir has been on line since 2014. It should be cleaned every 3 to 5 years. He thought that should be a high priority along with getting the VAC truck fixed. Jake added that the "black" water comes from iron manganese. It is suggested that it be treated with phosphate, but it is not a requirement. Jake is new to town and would like to help to make things better. John said we are on a list with a mechanic to get the VAC truck fixed. In the meantime, we have a sewer jetter on a trailer if we need it. Jake commented that the sewer lines need to be cleaned regularly. John agreed that it should be done, but we are behind in getting on a regular schedule. Jake added that getting the clay valve at the new well should be a priority, too. Rick said manholes haven't been cleaned for several years. There is one that really needs some attention. But if we have a problem, we can hit it with the jetter. We test the water every month as scheduled and we are way below the maximum levels. It is periodically tested in different places throughout town. Rick thought part of the issue with brown water had to do with the fact that the water use has changed some since the Fire Department no longer uses the hydrant at City Hall. Now they use the hydrant by the new fire station so the water moves farther through the system before they draw it out. The water at the well is tested every week. We are not required to do a phosphorus test, but we did one anyway and it came back okay. We are treating the water as much as we can. Rick also reminded that some of the water problems could be between the main and the house. There are a lot of places that still have the old galvanized pipe and they could be caked up. Well #5 has never actually been on-line. It was designed as a back-up. Jake noted that the North Powder water system achieved an award in 2015, but Rick may need some extra help from the Council. We are a small town and can't afford to call for a lot of outside help.

**Agenda:** Logan moved to accept the agenda. Vicki seconded. All were in favor.

**Minutes:** John asked for amendments or acceptance of the minutes from February 6, 2023. Logan made a motion to accept the minutes from February 6, 2023. Cody seconded. Motion carried with 4 in favor, Logan, Justin Cody & Lindsey. Vicki and Jeff abstained as they weren't at the February meeting.

**Accounts Payable:** There were only 2 additions to the Accounts Payables; \$348.46 to CenturyLink and \$27.69 to Eagle Office. The total bills came to \$16,087.56. There was one addition to the grant bills;

\$2927.60 to the DEQ for the 1200-C permit for the wastewater project. The grant bills came to \$22,330.05. Logan made a motion to pay the bills. Vicki seconded. All were in favor.

**Old Business:**

**Meeting Room Bid Opening:** We received two bids for the meeting room construction. One was from JBK Construction, received on February 23, 2023 and the other from KC Industries in Walla Walla on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Beth handed the sealed bids to Logan, as the project manager. Logan opened the bid from KC Industries first. They accepted the terms of the bid and the total labor cost came to \$22,275. Beth clarified that the City will purchase the materials so bids are for labor only. Logan opened the bid from JBK Construction. The terms were accepted and the bid came to \$14,750. Bids were passed around for the council to review. John noted that this project will be paid for with city funds, no grants. Logan met with both contractors to walk through the project. It will mirror City Hall, but less complex. There will be a single division wall and the roll-up doors will be removed and replaced with windows. The ceiling will not be lowered. John added that we will put acoustic tiles on the walls to help with sound. Logan estimated the total cost, including electrical should be around \$45,000. Jeff added that it goes along with the proposed new library. Jake wondered why we need a room of this size for council meeting room. Logan explained that it will be a shared space with the library. There will be a connecting door and we expect it will be used more for library than city council. He estimated that it will be about 1/5 the cost of starting new. The room behind city hall is smaller than the grange. John asked if there were questions regarding the 2 bids. Jeff asked what the difference in the bids was. Logan said there was roughly \$7000. KC Industries would bring in a crew to do the work. JBK would do it all himself. Vicki made a motion to accept the bid from JBK. Logan seconded. All were in favor. John reiterated that the bid from JBK Construction was for \$14,750.

**Library Update:** Beth said we can't get a CDBG grant application together in time for the April deadline but we can apply in September. Mike Schoeningh was asked to contact Carl Eisell, from La Grande, to look at the building. Mr. Eisell is a mason and would like to be included in the building bid. Joyce wondered if we could get a different grant to make things go faster. Beth thought we'd have to apply for multiple grants and that could take just as long as well as the fact that most grants will not finance the entire project like a block grant will. We have applied for a Technical Assistance (TA) grant from the Ford Foundation to hire a grant writer and to have someone write a scope of work with a cost estimate for the grant application. We are waiting to hear if we got the TA grant. We still have to have the scope of work with a cost estimate regardless of the grant.

**Wastewater Project Update:** Beth noted that we received the paperwork from Business Oregon's Water/wastewater loan. The agreement has been turned over to the city attorney for an opinion from legal counsel. We also need to pass a resolution to accept the loan. Since we didn't receive the paperwork in time to advertise the resolution, she hoped to schedule a special meeting. Vicki wanted to combine a work session with the special meeting. The special meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7PM.

Beth also turned the construction contract over to the attorney to review. The 1200C permit application has been submitted. We hope to have everything ready to sign by the end of the month.

**New Business:**

**Clean Up Day:** The annual clean-up day is usually in April around Earth Day which is April 22. Donna Beverage noted that Union County has funds available for clean-up. She thought the County would do a match of up to \$2000. Beth added that in the past Les Schwab in La Grande has taken a trailer load of old tires at no charge. We also take e-cycle. In the past we have charged a minimal fee of \$5 per pick-up load to help pay for the dumpsters. She thought the city paid over \$800 last year.

**Council Handbook:** Vicki felt the proposed Council Handbook turned out really well but we need to have a work session to review it. Jeff wondered if it was copied from someone else. Beth said it was modeled after the League of Oregon Cities Handbook. Once the council is okay with it, we should send it to CIS Risk Management and LOC to review. One of the policies mentioned is that we will use Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline for conducting council meetings but we don't have to strictly adhere to them. Logan suggested we move the special meeting to 6PM on March 21<sup>st</sup> to be followed immediately by a work session. Everyone was okay with the change.

**Library Report:** Barbara Weeks reported that the Library Board is planning an Easter Breakfast at the Grange on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 8AM to 11AM. The goal is to have information available regarding the library building project and to get the community involved. The breakfast will be free of charge but they will ask for donations for the library project. Maurizio from the Ford Family Foundation is willing to sponsor the breakfast and would prefer supplies be purchased from local businesses. It will be advertised in the Observer, the Twin Mountain News, and fliers. They also plan to have the Easter Bunny in attendance. T-shirts, book bags and water bottles have been ordered for the Summer Reading Program. The library will have watermelons for sale during the Farmer's Market. Watermelons will be donated by Walchili Farms.

The library would like to schedule a clean-up day close to the city clean-up day so they can clean out the upstairs of the building.

The City-wide Yard Sale will be June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The library will have another yard sale during the Huckleberry Festival. There will be a family movie night on July 28<sup>th</sup>. They are asking for suggestions for a movie.

**Huckleberry Report:** Shiloe Weston handed out a list of proposed events for the Huckleberry Festival. New this year are a Dutch Oven Cook-off, bed races, potato races, and horseshoe tournament. Vendors have already started signing up. Road closures are proposed to be the same as before. There were complaints last year about shutting the street dance down at 10PM. Shiloe asked the Council for permission to extend it to 11PM or even midnight. It will be on E Street in front of the Grange and Post Office. There will be a fence around the dance area. She also asked if they could use the hand-washing stations again and get help with mowing. Lindsey will submit the parade application to ODOT. Logan asked what the council wanted to do about the street dance. Lindsey thought there was a City noise ordinance so she stopped the dance at 10PM last year. Shiloe thought it was a State ordinance that said from 7AM to dusk. Beth will check, but she thought the council could approve a special event if it was advertised as a one-time thing. Logan moved to allow the street dance to go up to midnight. Justin seconded. All were in favor.

**Public Works Report:** The Rural Fire Department asked if the city would loan or donate an old hydrant that they can use for practice and training. We have an old one that Rick thought we could loan to them. They could bolt it to something to anchor it, but shouldn't weld it to anything. He thought he had already been given permission to purchase a new hydrant. The council had no objections to the loan. Rick had another meeting with DEQ. They are having a hard time writing a permit that we can meet requirements. They are at a point where they are about ready to start fining and penalizing the city. They thought the fines would be more than the cost of dredging if this goes on much longer. There were some questions on one of the formulas in the DMR that might give us some relief. Rick commented that the roof on the block building behind the shop is starting to develop holes. Logan will talk to Jered about it.

Jeff wondered how far behind we are on getting the VAC truck fixed. John thought Kenny was still a couple of weeks out. He can try to find somebody else.

Vicki wondered about the clay valve at well #5. Rick said the valve has been repaired and replaced. He has put some supports under the pipe. The valve is basically set but needs to be tested. There are

multiple tests that need to be done. He reiterated that it needs to be on-line but it was designed to be a back-up. We can manually turn it on but it's too close to the electrical panel so it gets too hot and trips the breaker. He's trying to find an electrician to do that. John asked Rick to make a list of everything that needs to be done to get the well up and running.

Beth mentioned there are 3 different training classes coming up that would help Rick get his certifications. All are the first week in April. One is in Pendleton (\$275), one in Keizer (\$305), and one is through BMI in Portland. The fee for the BMI course is \$425, but Rick can do it on-line instead of having to travel to Pendleton or Keizer, saving the city money for gas, food, and motel. According to the class description, by the end of the training Rick should be ready to take the water certification test. Jake Jones highly recommended BMI, having had experience with them. He also suggested Rick might be able to borrow some training books or manuals from Baker. Jeff made a motion to approve \$425 for Rick to take the BMI training. Cody seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Jeff wondered if Rick needed to have a certain number of documented hours in order to take certification tests. Rick thought that was more the case for sewer than water.

**Recorder Report:** Water overages in February came to \$264.69. Beth applied 16 freeze credits for total of \$66.86 and billed the difference of \$197.83. We used 1,218,070 gallons of water. It was noted in the newsletter that this will probably be the last freeze credits applied for this winter, depending on what the weather does.

New councilors should have received an email to create an account with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission. Filing invites are sent out about the 15<sup>th</sup> of March and are due by April 15<sup>th</sup>. Don't forget to file. Failure to file can incur fines of up to \$5000, billed to the individual.

Beth thought we should think about a work session to discuss ARPA Funds. Filing is due April 30<sup>th</sup>. We received a total of \$102,144.14. We spent \$4796 on the heating unit for City Hall which leaves a balance of \$97,348.14. She thought changes to the rules would allow us to use up to 30% of the total amount on a CDBG project.

Beth noted that we had a small change on the Credit Card acceptance. Charges are 2.9% of the total for each transaction plus 35cents so that the charge will automatically be calculated with the transaction. Should be up and running anytime.

**Ordinance Enforcement:** Beth said Shawn had questions about the burning ordinance.

**Mayor's Message:** John noted that we ordered a solar light for the flag pole next to City Hall. He will get it installed.

The tree guy has had some problems with his truck and the ground has been really soft so it will be a little while before he gets here.

John set in on the DEQ meeting that Rick mentioned. They highly recommend that we get the #2 pond dredged as soon as possible. Cody wondered if our wastewater grant would cover the cost of the dredge. John said we would have to see if there is any contingency money left when we get the rest of the project done. We need to figure out what it would cost.

**Council Comments:** None

Meeting adjourned at 8:14PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Attest:

Beth Wendt  
City Recorder