

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

**Attendance:** Mayor John Frieboes, City Councilors Vicki Townsend, Logan McCrae, Jeff Nielsen, Lindsey Thompson and Justin Wright. Beth Wendt City Recorder, Rick Lawyer Public Works, Lisa Aichele Librarian. Others: Barbara Weeks, Wynn Nielsen, Mike Wisdom, Joyce Lawyer, Don & Nina McClure, Midge Clause, Nancy Klein, Barry Princevalle, Dave Hoene, David Schwehr.

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

**Public Comment:** Dave Hoene was concerned about people dumping stuff on lots. It brings in rats and mice. He was also concerned about the tire pile at the end of Center Street. There was a break out of West Nile Virus this summer and that is a perfect breeding ground for mosquitos. He wondered if we could get a group of volunteers to help haul stuff to the Haines dump. John suggested he compile a list of places. Dave said they were everywhere. He thought it was a matter of just offering some help. Lindsey wondered if we should put something in the newsletter and people could reach out to City Hall.

Dave volunteered to act as the Ordinance Officer. Logan noted that we have an expectation for the Ordinance officer. The City Council has set priorities and as long as Dave was on the same page, he was okay with Dave volunteering for a while to see how things go and the Council could discuss the possibility of hiring him at a later date. Barry interjected that the City Council should back him up. Dave agreed he would get his priorities from the Council. Logan made a motion to allow Dave Hoene to volunteer to act as the Ordinance enforcer representative for the City of North Powder. Jeff seconded. All were in favor.

Barbara thanked the City for turning the Car Rally over to the Grange. They had about 150 cars here and they were the best mannered people. They get over 1000 applications each year and do a rally in different states.

Joyce asked if the City would allow Rick to haul in some dirt to fill in a hole where she had a tree removed on the City right-of-way. Vicki noted that when she had some shrubs removed at her house, she was told that City didn't do that. So, she paid to have dirt hauled in. She thought the City should figure out who will pay for having trees and shrubs removed and if we do for one, we should do for all. John commented that Joyce paid to have the tree removed and she just wants dirt to fill in the hole. The council agreed to allow Rick to haul a load or two of dirt to fill the hole.

**Agenda:** Logan made a motion to accept the agenda. Vicki seconded. All were in favor.

**Minutes:** Logan moved to accept the minutes from October 2, 2023. Vicki seconded. Motion carried with 4 in favor. Justin abstained, as he was absent.

Vicki made a motion to accept the minutes from October 9<sup>th</sup> and October 11<sup>th</sup>. Jeff seconded. Motion carried with 3 in favor. Justin & Logan abstained due to absence.

**Accounts Payables:** There were 3 spread sheets. One was for late bills from September that hadn't come in as of the October meeting. They were already paid. The total came to \$16,526.36.

There were two additions to the October bills; \$1070 to Bingham & Bingham for May and June, and Byrnes Oil for a total of \$285.26. We also got invoices from Bingham's to catch them up to date but they were not included in the total. The current AP came to \$28,336.97. That included \$9000 for the progress billing on the annual audit and \$5846 to DEQ for penalties.

The third spread sheet was for the Wastewater Grant. The total was \$161,383.89. This will be paid with grant funds. Beth transferred \$175,000 from the LGIP account to the Umpqua account to cover the bills. Logan made a motion to pay the bills. Vicki seconded. All were in favor.

**Library Report:** John introduced the new librarian Lisa Aichele. Lisa reported that there were 82 people who visited the Library in October. She has moved some things around to open up the entry and make the

Library more inviting and easier access. She felt it was a safety issue. She has gone through file cabinets and purged some files for storage, and took some books to Archivers in La Grande.

The Library had a generous donation from the Lunch Bunch for the new Library building fund.

Lisa asked for Council approval to change the Library hours to Noon to 4PM on Tuesdays and Wednesdays through the winter. Next spring they would go back to 2PM-6PM. Logan felt there should be some times when the library would be open for people who work until 5PM. Lisa noted that they are open on Saturdays from 10AM to 2PM. The Council approved the change in hours.

**Huckleberry Festival:** Lindsey noted that the Huckleberry Festival has been approved for a grant to purchase some canopies, seating, misters and cooling stations from the Union County Tourism. They are looking into grants for advertising. The next meeting will be in March. Dave wondered when the partitions would be moved from the lot. Lindsey didn't realize it was an issue. Dave offered to help move them.

**Public Works:** Rick & Dave have been working on winterizing things. The sprinklers at the lagoons are done. They put about 1 million gallons of water into the new evaporation pond but had to manipulate a clay valve to make it work. Rick thought the clay valve would require an annual inspection. He wants to see if we can have it removed.

We need more rock at both the lagoon and on 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

There have had some issues with the alarm at the well. They are trying to work through them.

We still don't have a quote from Saunders for the water tank.

Rick will take the new dump truck into town to have the oil changed. He has been looking at snow plow blades. They run anywhere from \$5000 to \$9000.

They are just about done with locates on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and are working toward sewer repairs on 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

Vicki wondered if we had funds to purchase a blade for the new dump truck. She thought we had a \$5000 cap on it. Since we got the truck at a better price than we thought, John felt we should look at getting a blade as soon as possible and we could add the left over funds to the cost of a blade. Logan made a motion to dedicate up to \$10,000 to get a plow for the new truck and have it installed so it is up and running. Jeff seconded. All were in favor.

John asked when Rick would get to Vicky Day's sewer problem. Rick thought maybe the end of this week or next week. Logan wondered what would happen to the old dump truck. Beth explained that as soon as we are ready to do something, the Council needs to pass a resolution to designate it as surplus equipment, and then we can sell it, donate it or just give it away.

Logan asked how much water went into the new pond. Rick reiterated that they put about a million gallons in and it was about 1 to 3 inches deep.

**Recorder Report:** Water overages in October came to \$299.84. We used 1,446,351 gallons of water.

We didn't get an SCA Grant for 2024. Region 5 recipients were Athena, Boardman, Canyon City, Joseph, Nyssa, and Wallowa.

OTEC has agreed to sponsor the Christmas Lighting Contest again. Logan wondered if OTEC would loan us a bucket truck for decorating the city Christmas tree. John will check.

**Mayor's Message:** OTEC augured the hole for the Christmas tree stand. John made a re-bar frame and poured the concrete today for a sand mount stand.

John attended a number of meetings last month.

Union Co. Road Department hauled some rock for the road side by the freeway entrance next to the Café.

We got about 60 yards and the County hauled it for free. A work crew did the weed eating and clean up, so now we need to get a work crew together to spread the rock.

John attended the open house at CJ's. They had a really good turnout.

Veteran's Day is coming up and John will put out flags along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.

The Rural Fire Department would like to help remove trees and stuff around town. Some of the troublesome trees and shrubs are on the City right-of-ways. Others are on private property and they will

need to work with home owners. There would be no cost to the City. John asked for permission to work with the RFD and to use his discretion to get started. The Council granted permission.

**Ordinance Report:** No report.

**Old Business-**

**Council Candidates:** John noted the two people who expressed interest in being on the Council were Mike Wisdom and Don McClure. The Council asked questions of the candidates at the last meeting and wanted to wait until they had a full council to vote. Logan nominated Don McClure to fill the City Council position. Vicki seconded the nomination. Motion carried with 4 in favor. Jeff abstained. Don was sworn in.

**Wastewater Update:** Beth noted that we had a grant monitoring meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Things seemed to go well. We don't have to do a Section 3 Workshop, thanks to the Saunders Company. They were very diligent about handling Section 3 requirements for low income workers.

**-2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing:** Beth read the 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing Notice in full. The City is completing a Wastewater System Improvement project funded with CDBG funds and is asking for questions or comments from citizens about the project. There were none.

**-Resolution #2023-R9:** The City needs to do something to meet additional Fair Housing requirements. Beth read a list of actions that the state will accept, one being to adopt a resolution that supports government assisted housing programs. Beth read Resolution #2023-R9, supporting Assisted Housing Programs as approved by OBDD. After some discussion, the Council decided to adopt the resolution. Vicki made a motion to accept Resolution #2023-R9. Don seconded. All were in favor.

Beth noted that we have submitted the bio solids removal plan to DEQ that was due by November 1<sup>st</sup>. The plan states that potential application sites have been identified for the solids removal. The City is in the process of obtaining funding to complete the removal project and will prepare a Bio Solids Management Plan and Site Authorization request for DEQ approval by March 1, 2024. Once the Plan and Site Authorization have been approved, bio solids will be removed via dredging and land applied in liquid form by September 15, 2024.

The City has received a WCPF Permit for the evaporation pond that was effective as of November 1<sup>st</sup>. We also have a new NPDES permit that will take effect as of December 1<sup>st</sup>. For the time being will be operating under both permits. Once we are sure that everything is working properly at the evaporation pond we can drop the NPDES permit, at which time it will eliminate some of the testing we are currently required to do. The other advantage to operating totally under the WCPF Permit is that we will no longer be required to have a certified wastewater operator.

Because DEQ knows we are trying to keep costs down so as not to have to take out another loan and raise sewer rates by \$13 a month, we can include in our bio solids management plan that we will remove as many bio solids as possible with what funding we already have and we will work toward removing the rest of them within the next 10 years. There is no guarantee that it will be approved so we should have an alternative plan, just in case DEQ requires it all be done now. Beth and Nick have been looking for additional funding and so far the only thing we have come up with is an additional loan/grant from the Water/Wastewater Program and they will only fund the difference of what we currently have lined up. Meaning we could get an additional \$200,000 that would be half loan and half grant. It would also mean we'd have to raise sewer rates to \$61.30 per month.

Beth explained that the latest penalties we received for permit violations came to \$11,692. DEQ has agreed to mitigate half of that so we have to pay \$5,846 now and try to figure out something that will satisfy the difference. Some of the penalties are new and some are from past violations. Rick thought there would be more penalties as some of the required testing on the new permits is impossible to do.

Beth noted that the Saunders Company has been very good to work with. However, they are requesting the City pay for some of the things that were included in their bid but the work was not done. They feel it was part of their profit margin. CDBG will not pay for work not done. It's been turned over to the City attorney. We have about \$80,000 of left-over grant and about \$5000 is dedicated to legal fees.

**City Council:** John interjected that since we have a full Council again, we need to elect a new Council President to take Jeff Grende’s place. Logan nominated Vicki. Justin nominated Logan and Lindsey seconded the nomination. Logan was elected with 5 in favor. Logan abstained.

Beth added that Jeff was her supervisor and a signer on the bank account. Don volunteered to replace Jeff as a signer and Vicki volunteered to be supervisor.

**Street Lighting Project Bids:** John noted that bids were for infrastructure wiring on the north side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from E Street to A Street. We got a grant from Union County to do the wiring and when that is done, we can start looking for ways to purchase street lights. We received only one bid. The bid was from Arros Electric for \$11,765 and they will credit back \$1500 if we have volunteer help, making the bid \$10,265. John hoped the project could be done this fall. Logan made a motion to accept the bid. Don seconded. All were in favor.

Beth added that ODOT would like to meet with the Mayor sometime in the next few months to go over their plans for replacing crosswalks. If we can wait to put in new street lights, ODOT may be able to offer some help with installation while they are doing crosswalks. They are concerned that they may have to redo some of them already. They estimate it will be 2026 before they get here, but we could go ahead and purchase lights at any time. John had estimates of about \$3000 each for 14 lights. Lindsey thought there might be some opportunities for State Main Street Revitalization grants.

**Electronic Speed Sign:** Beth has been trying to get in touch with someone at ODOT about grants for an electronic speed sign. She wondered if the Council was willing to commit matching funds if we can get the grant that Karlie mentioned last month. Lindsey wondered if we had money in the budget to do so. Beth noted there is money allotted to street repairs. Logan liked the idea of getting a trailer sign instead. It can be moved around as opposed to being locked into one place and they are probably cheaper. Some people won’t pay attention regardless of which sign, but some people do. Beth added that a stationary sign has to be ODOT approved but a trailer does not. John will call the Sheriff and OSP about speeders. Don suggested we table the issue until we can get more information. Beth will check into the cost of a radar trailer.

**City Hall/Library Update:** Beth commented that the interior and exterior walls for the meeting room were up but we are waiting on windows and doors. John added that Jered is working on scheduling the electrician. We are still waiting to hear whether or not we got a CDBG grant for the Library. Logan added that we have a plan for heating the meeting room.

**New Business:**

**Appoint Budget Officer for 2024-2025:** Every year we need to make a resolution to appoint a budget officer. Beth read Resolution #2023-R10 appointing Jason Bingham as the Budget Officer for 2024-2025. Logan made a motion to adopt the resolution. Don seconded. All were in favor.

**Council Comments:** Vicki commented that the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting will be Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>. Line up for the parade will be at 4:45PM and the parade starts at 5PM. It will come from the High School to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and end at City Hall where we will light the Christmas tree and do some caroling. Everyone will be invited to put their special ornaments on the tree and then the Rural Fire Department will do a hayride to the fire department for the chili feed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31PM

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Beth Wendt  
City Recorder