
CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER GOVERNING BODY

Verl Pressnall At Large, Position 1
Steve Irving At Large, Position 2
Edwin E. Chesnut (CL President) At Large, Position 3

Lewis S. Key Mayor
Vacant Ward 1
Bradley J. Humbert Ward 2
Jose Garcia Ward 3

**CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES****December 9, 2019**

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met Monday, December 9, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Albee Room of the Library, 8 SW 8th Avenue, Milton-Freewater, Oregon.

The following City Council members were present: Mayor Lewis Key, Councilors Steve Irving, Jose Garcia, Verl Pressnall, Ed Chesnut and Brad Humbert.

Ward 1 council seat is vacant.

Staff members present were: City Manager Linda Hall, City Recorder Leanne Steadman, Public Works Superintendent Brian Steadman and Public Works Technician Steven Patten.

Citizens and Guests present were: Abe Currin and Kate Winters along with members of the local Cub Scouts.

Representing the news media was Sherrie Widmer of the Valley Herald.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of:

- Council Minutes from November 12, 2019
- Accounts payables from November 6, 2019 through November 19, 2019
- Accounts payables from November 20, 2019 through December 3, 2019

Councilor Pressnall motioned to adopt the consent calendar items. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

TABLED BUSINESS ITEMS:**RESOLUTION NO. 2409, AMENDING RATES FOR THE MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE**

Councilor Chesnut stated since tabling the Golf Course rate resolution at the last month's meeting he got together with the Golf Pro George Gillette and discussed several of the issues regarding the rates. He stated that discussion was reviewed in the communication that he sent out by email. One of the primary reasons that headed him to tabling the item last month was whether or not they had created a monthly cart shed rate when the intent at the time was for only an annual rate but identify what the monthly rate would be if you made monthly payments. He stated following discussions with Mr. Gillette it was clear to him that some modifications might be a good idea for the golf course rate proposal. He stated he provided that with the primary change being listed on the resolution in "red". It lists a way to go about a monthly payment plan for any annual items it also discusses how to prorate annual green fee passes for less than a year. The period can only be shortened from the calendar year, you can buy 12, 11, 10, 9 months or you could sign up in December but there is no way to get the annual pass pricing. He said this puts it on the rate resolution so the Golf Pro has direction on how to handle the payment. He stated those are the items on the rate schedule which shows the boiling down of his discussion with Mr. Gillette.

Councilor Irving stated he agreed with what Councilor Chesnut recommended.

Councilor Humbert stated he understood offering a monthly fee for the trail fees but didn't understand offering a monthly fee for the cart shed. He stated to him, it was an annual type fee. You either do or don't have a cart shed.

Councilor Chesnut stated that was the original proposal. He stated part of the reason of suggesting a change was there are more cart sheds available than what is being rented. He gave the example of someone who is visiting for a couple of months, walks in the door wanting to rent a cart shed for July and August and the Golf Pro would say "you can rent one for a year that's your option."

Councilor Humbert then referred to Councilor Chesnut's calculations of greens fees. He stated he has heard rumblings from the Golf Club about the Golf Pro's contract. He stated the council needs to have a serious discussion regarding the golf course along with an exit strategy and direction the golf course needs to go. He stated he was a big advocate of the Point of Sale (POS) software at the golf course and he said he believed that not everything is being put through the POS system and he would like to see everything go through it to give the council more data and information moving forward to help with making better decision on where they are going to go forward with the golf course, pro shop and restaurant at a later date. He said it was a lot more complicated than most people think it is.

Mayor Key stated that in Councilor Chesnut's comments, the golf course is way under capacity of the amount of players.

Councilor Humbert stated he understood that Wildhorse (Tribal Casino) just dropped their annual rate for a family of four to \$1,000.

Abe Currin , Golf Club President, stated that the Wildhorse rate was \$1,200.00 for a family of four and the single rate was \$1,000.00.

Councilor Chesnut thanked Councilor Humbert for bringing up the Golf Pro's contract. He stated that there has been a request from the City Manager in two separate reports asking for council comments on the Golf Pro's contract and to his knowledge she has received no comments including him. He said there was some urgency in considering the rate resolution being adopted if the council wanted to offer the annual passes on a calendar year basis.

Councilor Pressnall stated being on the golf course committee that discussed the fees, he said he felt the fees were pretty much where he thought they were headed anyways, although a few slight modifications. The cart rental fees were what he was thinking they were doing anyways. He stated he was comfortable with the rates.

Councilor Irving motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2409, Rate Amendment for the Municipal Golf Course as submitted by Councilor Chesnut. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Councilor Humbert stated he sees it only fair that the city council give the City Manager some direction on the Golf Pro contract. He suggested a one year extension to buy them time to figure out the direction of the golf course and he knows that there are upcoming tournaments that need to be scheduled. Having a Golf Pro under contract is vital to getting some of that work done. He stated he was comfortable with the City Manager sitting down with the Golf Pro and figure out a

temporary one year extension to his current contract since the city council has had a lack of communication to her on the subject.

Councilor Irving motioned to authorize a one year extension to the Golf Pro contract and authorized the City Manager to work with the Golf Pro on the details. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed by the majority with Councilor Chesnut being the dissenting vote.

Councilor Chesnut stated he reason for voting no was due to a disagreement of the amount of the term.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

AUTHORIZE – PARTNERING WITH THE WALLA WALLA BASIN WATERSHED COUNCIL IN APPLYING FOR A DRINKING WATER PROVIDERS PARTNERSHIP GRANT

Public Works Technician Steven Patten stated he was contacted by the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council with the idea of the City partnering with them on submitting a Drinking Water Providers Partnership Grant. The Drinking Water Providers Partnership (DWPP) is through the US Forest Service. There are two main goals of the DWPP which are to: 1) Restore and protect the health of watersheds which communities depend upon for drinking water through development of local partnerships between drinking water providers, landowners and restoration practitioners and 2) Benefit aquatic and riparian ecosystems, including native fish that inhabit them, through successful implementation of restoration and protection projects. The WWBWC, restoration practitioner, has asked to partner with the City, drinking water provider, to begin the process of characterizing the upper Walla Walla Watershed to inform future water supply needs for the City and identify potential projects for restoration and protection. The project would have three components: 1) reviewing/compiling any existing data, 2) mapping input locations, measuring flow, temperatures, specific conductance, pH, dissolved oxygen and turbidity and 3) outreach program, provide information about the City's water sources, treatment and distribution system, regional ground water declines and conservation opportunities. He stated the city is currently updating its Water Management and Conservation Plan for the Oregon Water Resources Department and the outreach component of this project would integrate into the updated plan and future requirements for public education and conservation. The WWBWC would be proposing a \$40,000 - \$50,000 grant with asking for the city to provide in-kind match of staff time. The grant would be about 18 – 20 months which would finish up in the fall of 2021.

Councilor Irving asked if the plan would fall in line with the 30 year strategic plan.

Mr. Patten stated yes it would.

Councilor Chesnut asked if there was an estimate of the amount of staff time required for the grant.

Mr. Patten stated approximately 150 – 200 hours over the course of the entire grant. He stated part of that time he will already be spending on updating the conservation plan and the outreach portion of the plan.

Councilor Chesnut asked if the WWBWC would be writing the grant and city staff would be involved in reviewing the grant.

Mr. Patten stated WWBWC would be the grant writer and grant manager, the city would also review and provide input.

Councilor Humbert motioned to authorize the City to partner with the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council in applying for a Drinking Water Providers Partnership grant, including in-kind match from City Staff. Councilor Irving seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH THE COUNCIL WITH ISSUES NOT ON THIS AGENDA

Abe Currin – stated he was representing the Golf Club Board. They wanted him to reiterate their support of George Gillette in renewing his contract. He stated it would help knowing with tournaments coming up for the board to be able to make plans. He said the golf club worked on the new deck and they also did some work on the arborvitaes. They have plans to expand the putting green and also to keep working on the sand traps with the City and Matt Chesnut. They have more fundraising projects in mind for the spring.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Hall stated during her budget presentation in June that there was no electric rate increase proposed in the budget but she stated there may have to be a rate increase later on depending on the increase passed on from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). BPA operates on a Federal fiscal year which is October 1st through September 30th. At the time of compiling the electric budget numbers there was an indication from BPA that there would not be a power rate increase but there may be a small transmission rate increase. Manager Hall stated there are several BPA rates, those being power rate, demand rate and transmission rate. During her budget presentation she stated staff would carefully review the BPA rates once the October bills came in. At the time she said she would do a mid-year update. The BPA rates, effective October 1, 2019, went up 9.16% on transmission and 3.28% on the power rates. She stated the BPA power bills are very complex and complicated to monitor. In addition to the power increases, the utility has had a loss of the sale of surplus power, firm and non-firm. There was also another credit called the look-back credit. These credits are almost non-existence anymore. She stated she was not proposing a rate increase at this time and that staff is carefully reviewing the financials. She said she did not want to have a rate increase in December/January because typically those bills can be fairly high depending on the winter weather plus the added cost of Christmas. She said it was very difficult to project and balance the budget, as an example, in October the utility hit demand in the later part of October but how she explained it was that the demand rate was then charged for the entire month of October. She said with the interest rates up a little the electric fund has had some additional earned interest of approximately \$180,000 which will help the fund. She has asked Electric Superintendent Mike Watkins to give a presentation at the January 2020 council meeting on the financial health of the electric utility and the challenges of the industry as a whole. One of the challenges right now is getting journeyman lineman due to all the work that is in California due to the fires.

Mayor Key asked if the customer base grows can the base number be adjusted with BPA.

Manager Hall stated it was the High Water Mark that Mayor Key was referring to and she stated yes it could.

Councilor Irving asked if there was a full crew on the line crew.

Manager Hall stated interviews were just held and there were four that were interviewed. She believed that the Mr. Watkins was moving forward with offering a couple of them a job.

Councilor Pressnall asked if there was progress in getting authorization to help BPA at their Walla Walla Substation in case of an outage.

Manager Hall stated Mr. Watkins has made good progress with that situation.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Chesnut stated he was the council liaison for Milton-Freewater Downtown Alliance (MFDA) and the City. He said he missed the last joint meeting. He stated that MFDA is gathering information from Oregon Main Street on what the process would be for them and the Milton-Freewater Chamber of Commerce to merge. He said this is an on-going discussion between the Chamber and MFDA.

Councilor Irving said he believed it was easier for a business to start up in Milton-Freewater than in neighboring cities. His employer was supposed to open at a new location in September and it still hasn't open.

Councilor Humbert agreed with Councilor Irving as his wife has also been working on opening a business in a neighboring city and they are into the process five months now.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

GOALS UPDATE – IN LIEU OF THE TRADITIONAL ORAL UPDATE, A PHYSICAL TOUR OF ONE OF THE CITY COUNCIL GOALS WAS GIVEN - PROGRESS OF THE CITY HALL ELEVATOR

Public Works Superintendent Brian Steadman led a tour of the City Hall Elevator construction and its progress.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor