
CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER GOVERNING BODY

Damien Reino At Large, Position 1
Steve Irving - Council President At Large, Position 2
Wes Koklich At Large, Position 3

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

**CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES****February 14, 2022**

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met Monday, February 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. via virtual platform “Zoom” due to COVID-19 and practicing social distancing.

The following City Council members participated: Mayor Lewis Key, Councilors Wes Koklich, Damien Reino, Jose Garcia, Steve Irving, and John Lyon.

Absent was Councilor Brad Humbert.

Staff members participating were: City Manager Linda Hall and City Recorder Leanne Steadman.

Guests and citizens participating were: Ryan Westman, Markie McRae and Celinda Timmons.

Representing the news media were: Sherrie Widmer of the Valley Herald and Sheila Hagar of the Walla Walla Union Bulletin.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of:

- Council minutes from January 10, 2022
- Accounts Payable January 5 – 20, 2022

Councilor Irving motioned to approve all items in the Consent Calendar. Councilor Lyon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

BUSINESS ITEMS:**RESOLUTION NO. 2480 – CALLING FOR AN ELECTION AND APPROVING A BALLOT TITLE FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING A FIVE YEAR LOCAL OPTION TAX MEASURE TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES (THIS MEASURE WOULD RENEW CURRENT LOCAL OPTION TAXES)**

City Manager Linda Hall reported in 2018, Council sent a ballot measure to the voters to levy a local option tax to fund capital improvements for aging and antiquated parks and recreational facilities. At that time, the Council proposed a levy of \$100,000 per year for five years. Voters approved the levy in the spring of 2018 and the levy was assessed that fall on the tax rolls. At that time, the levy was assessed at a rate of 37 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. So for a home assessed at \$100,000, the levy cost \$37.00 per year. With this renewal of the local option request, if approved by council to send to the voters, the levy will cost less than it did five years ago, because the assessed value has grown. The renewal local option tax would cost 32 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value and cost the owner of a house assessed at \$100,000 \$32.00 per year, that is \$5.00 less than five years ago. She reported the vast majority of the revenues from the previous levy have been spent on the renovation and repair of the Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center. Prior to the 2018 local option tax levy, the citizens were given opportunities to establish priorities that these tax

revenues would be used for, and the list is far from exhausted. This was considered at the January Council meeting, the Mayor and Council agreed it would be good to have the opportunity to complete all the improvements on the list, but the one levy was not sufficient to do so. If the measure were to be approved, the measure would be sent to the May 17, 2022 ballot and would require a simple majority to approve. The levy would raise approximately \$85,000 a year from the \$100,000 assessed. It would cost property owners approximately 32 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2480, Resolution of the City of Milton-Freewater Calling an Election for the Purpose of Approving a Five Year Local Option Tax Measure under Authority of ORS 280.060 to Maintain and Improve Parks and Recreation Facilities. Councilor Irving seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF REVISED ADDITIONAL SERVICE REQUEST #1 WITH FFA ARCHITECTURE & INTERIORS

City Manager Linda Hall stated in November of last year we amended the scope of services with FFA Architecture & Interiors to include an additional service request for the design and engineering of the communications systems for the new police station. This work was contracted to be done by CSI Telecommunications, Inc. Recently it has been decided this would be advantageous for the City to directly appoint the provider of the service rather than having it go under the umbrella of FFA. By directly contracting with this provider it will save the project money and still accomplish the same goal. This action lowers the cost of the contract with FFA by a total amount of \$58,400.

Councilor Lyon motioned to approve the revised Additional Service Request #1 with FFA Architecture & Interiors by the reduction of \$58,400 for omission and telecommunications system design. Councilor Reino seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL TO ACCEPT PROPOSAL FOR DESIGN, ENGINEERING AND BID SPECIFICATIONS FROM CSI TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC. FOR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM FOR NEW POLICE STATION

City Manager Linda Hall stated as previously explained in the previous item, the Project Management Team and Design Engineering firm FFA Architecture & Interiors recommended CSI Telecommunications, Inc. as they are experience in the specialty field of dispatch and police communications systems. Originally this service was planned to be included under the total services of FFA design agreement, by directly contracting with CSI will save the project money. The proposal is for a fixed firm price of \$45,800. She noted that the fact sheet had contained a typo—her own error—which stated a price of \$48,800—however the \$45,800 amount in the recommendation language was the correct amount.

Councilor Lyon motioned to accept proposal for design and engineering and bid specifications of the radio system improvements for new police station building with CSI Telecommunications Inc. for a fixed firm price of \$54,800. Councilor Irving seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF REVISED JOB DESCRIPTION FOR CONSERVATION SPECIALIST POSITION

City Manager Linda Hall stated that long-tenured Conservation Specialist Pat Didion, retired after 30 years on the job. As with many of the long-tenured employees, his job with the city changed and grew over the decades. The primary essential function of the job is to serve as the electric utility's

“efficiency expert” when it comes to managing electric load, demand charges and peak usage. This position also helps customers who are trying to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient, save money and improve their quality of living. Another frequent task of this job is to respond to customers who call with high bill concerns. This position also aids the electric department and at times the planning department with minor jobs in the field work. The job description revision updates the core essential functions of this position by modernizing goals within the electric industry and implementation of state wide and local goals of conservation.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve revised job description for Conservation Specialist position. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO APPROACH THE COUNCIL WITH ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Markie McRae, 210 Locust Avenue, stated she grew up in Milton Freewater and was always very active with swimming and an avid user of the City pool. She was a swimming instructor for many years. She stated the pool water temperature is too cold and hampers the enjoyment of the pool. She urged the Council to reconsider their earlier decision and purchase two heaters for the pool.

The Mayor and Council President explained that the Council was trying to balance all the priorities of the citizens and there was not enough money to accomplish all of them. They further explained that the pool repairs were much more expensive and extensive than originally estimated.

Ryan Westman, 202 SE 7th, stated that he and his family also use the pool frequently and he did say it was colder than was comfortable. He further asked if the local option tax measure being voted on could be increased to raise more funds for these projects.

The Mayor explained that the Council was trying to be sensitive to the voters and not ask for too much money.

The Mayor thanked Ms. McRae and Mr. Westman for their comments.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Hall reported that departments are still dealing with long delivery times and low stock of materials and huge increases in costs. She reported she had two requests of Council this evening due to this issue. One was for an emergency purchase of conduit for a total of \$45,707.25 to Platt Electric. She reported these costs have gone up 400% and bids, which were solicited, would only be honored for two days. This was not enough time to get the purchase authorized by Council before the cost increased again, or the delivery was even further delayed. These materials are necessary for the extension and repair of our electric utility infrastructure which is vital to our public services and health. The second example of this is a proposed purchase of the Okonite underground wire for the extension of electric services to our south hill development. This purchase is also greatly increased, with the quotes only being honored a very short period of time. The proposed purchase is for \$28,725 to the vendor Anixter Inc.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve both these purchases as presented. Councilor Lyon seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

COUNCILOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Irving announced that the 4th booster shots for the COVID vaccine were available to immune compromised individuals.

Councilor Koklich stated that Milton Freewater has been getting some good publicity lately and he has enjoyed those articles. However, he stated that there seems to be an outbreak of graffiti in our community and wondered what was being done about this.

Manager Hall responded by saying that our Code Enforcement Officer was well aware of the situation and working with property owners to get it eradicated. We also partner with the volunteer group "Graffiti Busters" who help paint over the graffiti if property owners need help. The city helps by supplying some paint and painting materials, a pick up for the volunteers use, etc. She stated it was a very difficult problem to solve and one that is not unique to Milton Freewater.

Councilor Reino suggested using the City's contract with the community corrections labor to assist property owners.

Manager Hall stated that was a good idea and she would pursue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor