
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

December 9, 2024

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, December 9, 2024 in the Albee Room of the City Library, 8 SW 8th Avenue at 7:00 p.m.

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

Councilor Brad Humbert was absent.

Youth Representatives Norma Rodriguez and Zachary Lamb were present.

Staff members present were: City Manager Chad Morris, City Recorder Leanne Steadman, Finance Director Laurie Bubar, Fire Chief Shane Garner, Library Director Lili Schmidt, Conservation Specialist Ryan Westman and Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon.

Guests and citizens present were: Patty Key, Kay West, Emily Holden, Paul Seaquist, Tammy Seaquist, Mike Odman, Arlen Calley, Suni Danforth, Markie McRae, Elionay Quiros-Meneses and Destiny Jensen.

Representing the news media were: Sherrie Widmer of the Valley Herald and Sheila Hagar of the East Oregonian.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of:

- Council minutes from November 12, 2024
- Accounts Payable November 5th – November 19, 2024
- Accounts Payable November 20th – December 3, 2024

Councilor Lyon asked why the council votes on the account's payables.

Manager Morris stated he assumed it was required by state law.

Councilor Lyon asked Manager Morris to look into that.

Manager Morris stated he would.

Councilor Lyon asked about a \$0.72 finance charge paid to Walla Walla Electric. He asked why was the City paying finance charges.

Manager Morris stated he noticed that as well and he would check on that.

Councilor Koklich stated there was a lot of abbreviations used, and asked what the teen snack was for.

Manager Morris stated it was for a library event.

Councilor Lyon asked about the RACOM payable for \$52,000.

Manager Morris stated it was radio software for the new police station, paid for with the bond funds.

A brief discussion ensued regarding radio encryption and it being a safety measure for police officers.

Councilor Lyon asked if that expense was written into the bond for the police building project.

Manager Morris stated it was part of the project paid for by the bond and grant funds.

Councilor Lyon asked again if it was written into the bond.

Manager Morris stated it was part of the radio system and if they don't have that, they wouldn't have anything to talk on.

Councilor Lyon asked if there were concerns regarding the RACOM billing.

Manager Morris stated he didn't see any red flag.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve all items on the Consent Calendar. Councilor Reino seconded the motion which passed by majority with Councilor Lyon being the only dissenting vote. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

REQUEST – KIWANIS CLUB OF MILTON-FREEWATER REPRESENTATIVE ASKING FOR AN EXEMPTION TO CITY CODE 8-2-19 TO ALLOW ALCOHOL IN YANTIS PARK FOR THEIR FUNDRAISING EVENT IN MAY 2025

Kiwanis President Ryan Westman requested an exemption to City Code 8-2-19 to allow alcohol in Yantis Park for their 4th annual Kiwanis Summer Kickoff Beer & Wine Festival. He stated their previous two years were a success, which raised \$30,000 for the benefit of the youth in the community. Last year funds went to investments for the club. The event is scheduled for May 17, 2025 from 4:00-9:00 p.m. at Yantis Park and they were once again striving for a family friendly event.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve the Milton-Freewater Kiwanis Club request for an exemption to City Code 8-2-19, allowing them to lawfully sell and consume alcohol in Yantis Park for their fundraising event. Councilor Reino seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were both in favor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2555 – AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE TO AN AGREEMENT WITH BLUE MOUNTAIN HUMANE SOCIETY

The city has had an agreement with Blue Mountain Humane Society for dog impound services for several years. Staff was notified that they were terminating the current agreement due to increased

fees for service beginning the first of the year. The proposed agreement reflects increased fees for years 2025, 2026 and 2027.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the number of animals taken to the shelter by city staff.

Councilor Koklich asked if the rate for an animal to be claim could be prorated.

Manager Morris stated the next agenda item was a proposal to adjust the city fee to reflect the increase.

Councilor Koklich asked if it was possible to offset the cost to the city for people not picking up their animal.

Manager Morris stated if council directed him, it could be modified, but his concern with going to high and it be too expensive for owners to pick up their animal.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2555, Resolution Authorizing Signature to the Dog Impound Agreement between the City of Milton-Freewater and the Blue Mountain Humane Society located in Walla Walla, Washington. Councilor Reino seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were both in favor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2556 – AMENDING THE USER FEE SCHEDULE TO REFLECT CHANGES ON THE ANIMAL CONTROL AND LIBRARY SCHEDULES

The proposed user fee schedule was amended to reflect the animal control schedule due to increase in fees with the Blue Mountain Humane Society for dog impound services and the library schedule due to the city council adopting the library fine-free policy in a previous meeting.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the changes to the animal control schedule.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2556, Resolution Amending the User Fee Schedule by Updating the Animal Control and Library User Fee Schedules. Councilor Reino seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were both in favor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2557 – ACCEPTANCE OF THE ABSTRACT OF VOTES REGARDING THE BALLOTS CAST IN THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 5, 2024

Manager Morris stated the General Election was held on November 5, 2024. The city is in receipt of the final official election results from Umatilla County. According to the City Charter, the council is the final judge of the election and qualifications of its members.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2557, Resolution Accepting the Abstract of Votes Regarding the Ballots Cast in Umatilla County, State of Oregon General Election Held Tuesday, November 5, 2024 Regarding Candidates for the City of Milton-Freewater. Councilor Reino seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were both in favor.

RECOGNITION TO THE OUTGOING MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Manager Morris presented Lewis Key with a plaque for his years of committed and dedicated service as Mayor for 24 years. He also presented Damien Reino with a plaque in recognition and appreciation for his public service as a city councilor for 4 years.

Mayor Key said it was a privilege to serve as Mayor of the City of Milton-Freewater for the past 24 years. He thanked the citizens for trusting him to lead the city forward and the council for the respect they have shown him. He thanked his wife Patty for allowing him time away from home and the understanding and support she has given him as Mayor. He thanked Leanne Steadman for the work and support she has provided him and he thanked the citizens that take the time to attend council meetings in person for their unput and guidance. He wished good luck to the new councilors as they move Milton-Freewater into the future.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Morris reported FEMA issued some rules on construction permitting in a designated flood plain. The League of Oregon Cities put out some recommendations on how to respond to FEMA as there seems to be some rules that conflict with Oregon State Law. FEMA was asking for a response from cities and if there was no response, then the city would fall into a permit-by-permit basis. This is a temporary order and the final rule is set to be released in 2026. The next item reported on was that Manager Morris signed an amendment to Bonneville Power Administration Transmission Agreement which added other power sources the city receives from Grant County which include Wanapum and Priest Rapids Dams. The city received a preliminary population estimate from Portland State University (PSU), the final certified number will be released December 15, 2024. He and City Recorder Leanne Steadman attended a Zoom meeting hosted by PSU which explained how they calculate and come up with the population figures.

A brief discussion ensued about this process.

Manager Morris reported there would be a new electric lineman starting mid-January that will fill the vacancy and a recruitment has been started for the search of another police officer. He reported that sound variances would no longer be approved through the police department, but rather he would be approving them on a case-by-case basis. He is looking into whether or not going through a broker for insurance would gain a larger discount for the city. He explained he was only looking at the possibility of going through an insurance broker and not at all interested in changing the insurance provider. He passed out to each councilor and Mayor a packet received, left in a box outside a city hall door, from Calvin Garton regarding a land use request of property in Umatilla County and Umatilla County Planning Commission's jurisdiction. The City was honored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in recognition of 50 years of weather observation in cooperation with the National Weather Service. A weather station and rain gauge are located at the waste water treatment plant that is monitored daily then reported to NOAA. RDI (Rural Development Initiatives, Inc.) will be giving a presentation to the council at the January 13, 2025 council meeting on their Ripple Effect Mapping project.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Lyon asked if a drop box was delivered with graffiti on it.

Manager Morris stated there was and it was taken care of that day and hoped it didn't happen again.

Councilor Lyon asked for an update regarding the recycling requirement July 2025.

Manager Morris stated he had a meeting with a DEQ representative a couple weeks again. He expressed his concern with curbside pickup and asked the representative if only individuals that wanted curbside pickup could sign up and not make it mandatory for all. The representative was going to check to see if that was an option. The rules have not been finalized, but from what is known, additional man power, vehicles and facility to accommodate the additional recycling would be needed. It's also unknown how much funding will be provided by the State in order to implement the new requirements.

Councilor Lyon asked about collecting lawn clippings and composting.

Manager Morris stated he would be interested in a program like that and it could be used around the city in beautification projects.

Councilor Koklich appreciated the updates provided in regards to the power outage.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the wind storm and the Bonneville Power Administration outage.

Councilor Irving appreciated that Public Works provided a bin for tree limbs.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Mike Odman, Mayor