
CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER GOVERNING BODY

Destiny Jensen At Large, Position 1
Steve Irving - Council President At Large, Position 2
Wes Koklich At Large, Position 3

Mike Odman Mayor
John Lyon Ward 1
Emily Holden Ward 2
Jose Garcia Ward 3

CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER

January 13, 2025

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, January 13, 2025 in the Albee Room of the City Library, 8 SW 8th Avenue at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Lewis Key called the meeting to order.

Mike Odman was sworn into his elected office of Mayor by City Recorder Leanne Steadman. Immediately after, outgoing Mayor Lewis Key handed off the gavel to Mike Odman.

Manager Morris presented Councilor Brad Humbert with a plaque showing appreciation and recognition for his twenty-two years of serving on the city council.

Re-elected councilor Jose Garcia – Ward 3, and incoming councilors, Emily Holden - Ward 2 and Destiny Jensen – At Large Position 1, were sworn into their respective offices by City Recorder Leanne Steadman.

The following members were present: Mayor Mike Odman, Councilors John Lyon, Wes Koklich, Destiny Jensen, Jose Garcia, Steve Irving and Emily Holden.

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, Library Director Lili Schmidt, Conservation Specialist Ryan Westman, Public Works Supervisor Nathan Lyon, Public Works Assistant/Project Aide Krista Gannon and Human Resource Officer Wendi Daugherty

Guests and citizens present were: Patty Key, Elionay Quiros-Meneses, Christine Gilmore, Kay West, David Prock, Dalia Odman, Angela Molina, Barbara Roloff, Rick Rambo, Tracy Rambo, Arlen Calley, Paul Seaquist, Tammy Seaquist, Donna Sheridan, Jimena Olmos, Sarah Odman, Martha Odman, Peter Mitchell, Katie York, Kenneth Jenkins and Matthew Jensen.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar item consisted of Council minutes from December 9, 2024.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve the council minutes from December 9, 2024. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

PRESENTATION ITEMS:

RDI (RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES) – UPDATE ON THE RECENT RIPPLE EFFECT MAPPING PROJECT CONDUCTED IN MILTON-FREEWATER

Elionay Quiros-Meneses and Christine Gilmore representing RDI (Rural Development Initiatives) gave an update on the recent Ripple Effect Mapping project conducted in Milton-Freewater. RDI was explained as having four main focuses: building leadership capacity through leadership training programs; supporting economic vitality efforts through a variety of programs; policy, advocacy and civic engagement and; connecting rural communities with resources. Ripple Effect Mapping is a highly engaging workshop that captures stories and impacts through a fun and celebratory process. Outputs can be used for assessments, reports, and narratives for grant applications, marketing, and storytelling.

DONATION – BLUE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION DONATION TO THE CITY LIBRARY

Rick Rambo and Barbara Roloff, representatives of Blue Mountain Community Foundation (BMCF), presented the city library with a donation, amount was not disclosed at the meeting. BMCF is a place for donors who care about the community to make long-term charitable investments. They have received and grown assets to exceed \$100 million in 401 charitable funds. They service Walla Walla, Garfield, Columbia and Umatilla Counties and offer grant and scholarship opportunities.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

ELECTION OF COUNCIL PRESIDENT

The City's Charter requires the election of a Council President from their membership at the first council meeting of each odd-numbered year. Councilor Irving has served since January 2021.

Councilor Lyon motioned to elect Councilor Steve Irving as Council President. Councilor Koklich seconded the motion which passed with Councilor Irving abstaining. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

ADOPTION OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION AGREEMENT

The Mayor and Council Communication agreement was updated to include the new Mayor and members on the council.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt the Mayor and Council Communication Agreement. Councilor Irving seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

APPOINTMENT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES; BUDGET COMMITTEE AND LIBRARY BOARD

In February of each year, staggered terms of the City advisory committees expire. A press release was published in the newspaper of record, the Valley Herald. The press release was also posted on city hall bulletin boards as well as posted on the City website. There were four applications received and all four were being recommended to be appointed. Mayor Odman had made the following recommendations for appointments: for the Budget Committee, Mike Charlo to a 3-year term and Kenneth Jenkins to a 2-year term, and to the Library Board – Margo Piver to a 4-year term and Jennifer LeBlanc to a 2-year term.

Councilor Lyon motioned to appointment Mike Charlo to the Budget Committee for a 3-year term, Kenneth Jenkins to the Budget Committee for a 2-year term, Margo Piver to the Library Board for a 4-year term and Jennifer LeBlanc to the Library Board for a 2-year term. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

BID AWARD – TO GENERAL PACIFIC, INC. FOR (2) 500 KVA TRANSFORMERS

Manager Morris reported staff had recently been made aware that the power requirements are changing for the Wine Production Facility proposed project, which the bid award was for. He asked the council for a motion to include a not-to-exceed dollar amount of \$68,960 for transformers. This will allow to go back out to bid for the updated size of transformer and not have any delay of ordering it after the customer pays 50% deposit.

Councilor Irving motioned to approve a purchase for transformers on a not-to-exceed basis of \$68,960. Councilor Lyon seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

RESOLUTION NO. 2558 – INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT WITH UMATILLA COUNTY COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

City Recorder Leanne Steadman had been working with Umatilla County Community Corrections Work Crew Supervisor Levi Papineau on the details of an agreement that would enable the City to bring in the county corrections work crews for a fee of \$180 per day, no matter the size of the crew. The agreement was reviewed by the City Attorney and the city's insurance carriers. Their recommendations were incorporated into the agreement.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the size of crew and the type of work they may be asked to perform.

Councilor Lyon motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2558, Resolution Authorizing Signature to an Intergovernmental Agreement with Umatilla County Community Corrections for the purpose of providing Community Corrections Work Crews. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

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

Brad Humbert – 1813 Oak Street, shared that the Milton-Freewater Water Control District also had an agreement with Umatilla County Community Corrections and it has worked out well. He then congratulated the new city council members on their appointments. Next, he recommended that a representative of Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) give an update to the city council on the new recycling program slated to take effect July 1st. He shared his concern that it may be very expensive for the city and its citizens. He stated he has not heard anything on the aquatic center and wasn't made aware of anything being received from the Walla Walla YMCA. He stated he would like to see something within the next two months on what the status was of the aquatic center.

Manager Morris stated recycling and the aquatic center were being addressed by him in his manager's report.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Morris reported there were recruitments in process for a police officer and an emergency communication specialist (dispatcher). There were 12 applications for police officer and 17 applications for a dispatcher received by the first review date. Chief Shurtz will be conducting part of the testing requirement on Saturday for the police officer position. He announced the city would be hosting the League of Oregon Cities Small Cities meeting on April 16, 2025 in the police department training room. Next item, he stated he had a meeting on Thursday with Circular Action Alliance (CAA) who will be handling the funding side of the new recycling mandate which takes effect July 1st. He said he would have a better understanding of what expenses would be paid for after this meeting.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the minimum population size that required the mandate, requirements to handle the mandate and what expenses would be reimbursable, for example the cost to transport the recyclables.

Manager Morris reported that the subscription service, only those who wanted the service paid, was not an option.

Councilor Koklich asked if rural citizens were going to be required to participate in the program.

Manager Morris said he would have to check into that.

At the December council meeting Councilor Lyon asked why the accounts payable registers were being approved by the council. Manager Morris stated it was for information only and no where is it required for council to have to approve. Items up to \$50,000 were authorized by the city manager and items over \$50,000 were taken to council for approval. The registers will not appear on the council agenda, but will still be included in the council packet. The Walla Walla YMCA submitted a service proposal to operate the aquatic center for the 2025 season last week. Manager Morris stated he was looking at other options and would be presenting that to council for consideration or recommendation at the next council meeting. Last year's schedule was based on the school schedules and one of the challenges is finding lifeguards. He stated whoever the city contracts with, itemized invoices will be required. Next, he reported he is working with Aaron Duff, School Superintendent on recreation facilities. They are looking to apply for funding through the legislature. They are also working on a mutual agreement. He announced he is working on labor negotiations with several units. The north and south water reservoir tanks were inspected. The south reservoir tank passed, but the north tank has a couple rust issues. Staff is looking at corrective action measures to fix the issue. Staff will start flying the drone to see the top of the tank more regularly. He had a handout passed out to the council that was received from "Common Cause" addressed to the city council regarding Federal funding cuts. Lastly, he announced he would be gone January 27th – 29th for City Day at the Capitol. As part of the event, meetings are scheduled with local legislatures.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Jensen asked if the League of Oregon Cities water survey had been submitted.

Manager Morris said he was reviewing the draft and it will be submitted by the deadline.

Councilor Koklich asked if funding had been secured for the water and electric infrastructure projects.

Manager Morris said he has met with Representative Greg Smith regarding both projects.

Councilor Lyon asked what the status was with the tennis courts.

Manager Morris stated he was hoping to move on that project soon, he has talked with Representative Greg Smith.

Councilor Koklich asked for an update on the fire that was in the news.

Manager Morris reported the fire was behind Washtub Willy's last Friday morning. One trailer was completely destroyed, the cause of the fire has not been released. The owner of the trailer made it out, but her two dogs didn't.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the privately owned property's accessibility and options for cleanup.

Sheila Hagar asked if city codes can be enforced on the confines of private property.

Manager Morris stated he was looking at other options, he has a meeting with a consultant regarding Urban Renewal on Thursday.

Councilor Irving shared his opinion regarding the Oregon sanctuary promise. He stated law enforcement should work with the Federal Government and ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and that it was a disservice to allow criminals to roam the streets.

Councilor Holden reported that Milton-Freewater Chamber Downtown Alliance has hired a new Executive Director, Claudia Osorio. Her office is located in the Blue Mountain Community College building and she welcomed people to stop by and meet her.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Mike Odman, Mayor