



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

November 06, 2013

City Council of the City of Ephrata, Grant County Washington met in regular session on November 6, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Chris Jacobson and adjourned to executive session to discuss planning or adopting a strategy for negotiations (42.30.140(4)b) for approximately thirty minutes. Executive session adjourned, no decisions were made or action taken. Meeting reconvened at 7:04 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Chris Jacobson, Mayor Pro Tem Bruce Reim, Council members Mark Wanke, Stephanie Knitter, Tony Mora, Valli Millard, William Coe and Kathleen Allstot.

Staff Present: City Administrator Wes Crago, City Attorney Anna Franz, Recreation Director Ray Towry, Public Works Director Bill Sangster, Police Chief Mike Warren, Fire Chief Jeremy Burns and City Clerk Leslie Trachsler.

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

No public signed up to speak.

Agenda: Agenda was amended adding item 2 to Section VII, Acceptance of Donation.

Consent Agenda: Motion was made to approve consent agenda. (m/s Coe/Allstot)
Motion carried.

Items on the consent agenda are as follows:

Claims #80496 through #80554 in the amount of \$124,172.98
Claims #80474, 80494 & 80495 in the amount of \$164.25
Payroll #43133 through #43169 in the amount of \$43,619.82
Payroll Claims #80475 through #80493 and Direct Debit in the amount of \$191,938.88
Payroll Direct Deposits in the amount of \$131,495.44
Minutes of the October 16, 2013 Council meeting
Set Public Hearing on the 2014 Budget and Ordinance 13-15 for November 20th and December 4th at 7:00 p.m.
Special Event Applications

- Veterans Day Parade/ Downtown area November 11, 2013

Public Hearing Ordinance 13-21 – Public Safety Sales Tax Measure: Mayor Jacobson opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m. This is the second public hearing. Crago gave a brief staff report and reviewed the staffing needs of the Ephrata Police Department.

Mike Wren, Manager of the Port of Ephrata, spoke in favor of the sales tax increase commenting that no one wants to pay for it but that doesn't negate the validity of the need. He also advised that we can't make businesses choose to locate in Ephrata but we can do things that deter them from coming by not addressing the needs of the community.

Jane Montaney of 204 Maringo Rd., Ephrata, spoke in favor of the sales tax increase and the importance of being proactive in crime prevention measures.

Public comment portion of the hearing closed at 7:17 p.m.

Mayor Jacobson commented that we are at the end of our options; either we increase revenue or start laying employees off.

Public hearing closed at 7:18 p.m.

Public Hearing Ordinance 13-16 – Ad Valorem Taxes: Mayor Jacobson opened public hearing at 7:18 p.m. In order to be able to collect property taxes, Council has to request the County to collect the taxes. Crago advised that the maximum we can collect over last year's assessment is 1%. Property taxes comprise approximately 7% of our total budget.

There being no public comment or council comments public hearing closed at 7:20 p.m.

Ordinance 13-16 Ad Valorem Taxes: Motion to approve and accept Ordinance 13-16 Ad Valorem Taxes. (m/s Allstot/Mora) Motion carried.

Ordinance 13-18 Amending EMC 5.03 “Business Licenses”: Crago advised that the switch to the Department Of Revenue for our business licensing process will reduce staff time especially with the renewal process. Staff is recommending the renewal fee be reduced from \$50 to \$40. This will also help defray the cost of the State application fee some of our business will incur.

Neta Whitver, 161 E St SW, Ephrata, addressed council with concerns regarding those businesses which are non-renewing with the State, how will they know to obtain a city license. She was informed that the city's data base was sent to the State and added to their system. The State's system will cross reference those businesses which have UBI numbers with an Ephrata address against our records. If there is someone who does not show as having a city license, we will then contact them to obtain one.

Motion to approve and accept Ordinance 13-18 amending EMC 5.03 entitled “Business Licenses”. (m/s Millard/Knitter) Council discussion ensued, motion carried.

Ordinance 13-22 Interim Zoning on Marijuana Sales: Crago gave a staff report stating that this ordinance declares an emergency exists regarding marijuana sales and production. If passed, it will protect the City and potential businesses from inappropriate vesting under current laws. It will be in effect no more than six months during which time the Planning Commission will determine more permanent regulations for marijuana for Council consideration. This interim ordinance provides the following:

- Provides for production in I-1 zone with certain state-legislated restrictions
- Provides for retail sales in C-2 zone with certain state-legislated restrictions
- Stipulates a work plan, hearings, and other clarifying statements
- States that this ordinance will prevail if it conflicts with other Codes

Crago further advised that the Attorney General released a letter in August stating that marijuana would be a low priority for the Federal Government for those states who have legalized it for sale.

Council discussion ensued.

Motion to approve and accept Ordinance 13-22 Interim Zoning on Marijuana Sales. (m/s Coe/Allstot) Motion carried.

Authorize Administration to re-enter Agreement with Quincy-Columbia Basin Irrigation District: Every five years we sign a no-fee agreement with the Irrigation District to haul sand from the Adco quarry.

Motion to authorize administration to re-enter a 5 year agreement with Quincy-Columbia Basin Irrigation District for sand. (m/s Wanke/Millard) Motion carried.

Authorize Administration to accept donation from OMNY. Crago advised that OMNY is a ministry of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. They have several fund raisers during the year and donate the money for scholarships for youth recreational programs.

Motion to accept donation from OMNY. (m/s Knitter/Coe) Motion carried.

City Administrator Report:

2014 Draft Budget: For all practical purposes the budget is done. The 2014 budget is 2.95% higher than 2013. We are still in contract negotiations that could result in some minor changes. Crago reviewed differences in the major fund totals compared to 2013. There were some reserves used in order to balance the budget although sales tax dollars have been up every month this year. Staff has been tracking where they spend their time to show true costs, this has caused some flux in various funds.

Council discussion ensued regarding the use of tourism dollars and results from those uses. Staff advised that it is very difficult to track.

Mayor Jacobson congratulated Council on a successful election.

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Chris Jacobson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Leslie Trachsler, City Clerk