

**OPENING OF COUNCIL MEETING**

Mayor Yaeger opened the remote/in-person council meeting at 7:00pm. The council members present were Eric Ottmar, Jen Verhey, Jessica Quinn, Brooke Scheel, Ky Beck-Gmeiner, and Mike Schrag. Council Member Dennis Chamberlain was excused. Staff members in attendance were Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt, Deputy Clerk Treasurer II Michelle Asmussen (remote), Public Works Director Dave Breazeale, Chief of Police Mike Suniga, and Community Development Director Tom Reese. City Fire Chief Joel Bell and City Attorney John Kragt were excused. Also present were Linda Schrag, Brian Bothun, Dan Peters, Rick from the Cheney Free Press, Ben Varela & Daniel Calger from Varela & Associates.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Yaeger asked if there were any corrections or additions to the consent agenda. Council Member Mike Schrag moved to accept the consent agenda for May 5th, 2026, with payables in the amount of \$14,861.17 and payroll in the amount of \$134,949.98. Council Member Jen Verhey seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

**PUBLIC REQUESTS AND COMMENTS**

Mayor Yaeger asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. Dan Peters at 406 E. Birch Ave addressed the Council regarding concerns about deteriorating property conditions throughout the community. Mr. Peters stated that abandoned vehicles, broken windows, excessive outdoor storage, and general property neglect were negatively impacting neighborhood appearance, property values, and the community's reputation. He also expressed concern regarding properties that appear residential in nature but are being used for business or commercial purposes. Mr. Peters encouraged the City to continue code enforcement efforts and address nuisance properties before conditions worsen further. Council members acknowledged the concerns and discussed the importance of maintaining community standards and preserving the appearance and safety of neighborhoods.

**ACTION AGENDA**

- A. Public Works Generator Service Agreement** - Public Works Director Dave Breazeale presented information regarding the annual generator service agreement for City facilities. He explained that Ontivity had historically performed maintenance work on the generators and submitted a proposal for continued annual service. Breazeale reported that Western States had also provided a quote while pursuing work related to a new generator installation at site #8. After comparing proposals, Ontivity's pricing was determined to be significantly more cost effective. Breazeale recommended approval of the Ontivity agreement due to cost savings and familiarity with the City's existing equipment. Council discussed the importance of maintaining backup power systems and ensuring continued reliability for critical infrastructure. Council Member Brooke Scheel made a motion to approve the one-year agreement with Ontivity for \$3,030 for generator services. Council Member Mike Schrag seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.
- B. Snaky Sewer Priority #1 Project Engineer Agreement-Varela Engineering and Management** - Council reviewed the proposed professional services agreement associated with the Priority #1 Snaky Sewers project. Ben Varela with Varela Engineering and Management explained the project received approximately \$750,000 in EPA funding and must be substantially completed before the grant expiration date of December 31. The project includes sewer infrastructure improvements in the alley between 8th and 9th Streets as well as portions of 5th and 6th Streets. The engineering work includes preliminary engineering, design development, preparation of bid and construction documents and coordination for construction bidding. Varela Engineering and Management have been identified as the consultant responsible for engineering and design services. Council discussed project timelines, funding requirements, and the need to complete design work promptly in order to allow construction activities to occur during the summer and fall construction season. Varela emphasized that failure to complete the work within the funding timeline could jeopardize grant

reimbursement eligibility. Council Member Brooke Scheel made a motion to approve the professional services agreement between the City of Ritzville and Varela Engineering and Management for the Snaky Sewers Priority #1 Project. Council Member Jen Verhey seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

- C. Leads Online Power Plus Investigations Systems Subscription-Police Department** - Chief Mike Suniga presented a request to approve a three-year agreement with Leads Online for the Power Plus Investigation System. He explained that the software would provide enhanced investigative tools allowing officers to search pawn shop databases nationwide, track stolen property, search electronic marketplace activity, utilize serial number identification, assist with recovery of stolen equipment and tools, and access phone extraction resources and investigative databases. The total estimated cost of the agreement is approximately \$7,000 over three years. Chief Suniga noted the system could assist in recovering property with substantial value and improve investigative efficiency. Examples discussed included the potential recovery of stolen tools and equipment identified in databases located outside the region, including items tracked to the East Coast. Chief Suniga also stated that officers recently completed in-service training and planned to provide additional public information through social media regarding new investigative tools and services available to the community. Council Member Jessica Quinn made a motion to approve the three-year Leads Online Power Plus Investigation System agreement in the amount of \$7,000 over three years. Council Member Mike Schrag seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

**DISCUSSION AGENDA** - No items.

**CORRESPONDENCE** - No items.

#### **REPORTS**


- A. MAYOR UPDATES** - Mayor Yaeger stated he may have a candidate for the Planning Commission, and he is meeting with a roofing company to get a bid for the golf clubhouse roof.
- B. COUNCIL COMMITTEE UPDATES:**
- License, Rules, and Permits – No report.
  - Finance and Employee Benefits – Everything was already discussed on the agenda.
  - Health and Wellness – Reported on upcoming community cleanup and beautification days scheduled for May 9th, 12th, and 13th, following appliance pickup day.
  - Public Safety – Meeting on Thursday 3:30pm at the Police Department.
  - Public Works – No report.
  - Parks and Recreation – New Pathway signs have been ordered, and installation will occur once the materials have arrived. The improvements have been completed at the Little League field signage.
  - Personnel Committee – No Report.
- C. City Attorney** – John Kragt excused.
- D. Public Works** – Director Dave Breazeale provided updates on recent and upcoming activities, including collection of approximately 60 appliances during appliance pickup day, completion of EV charging station painting, continued downtown improvement work prior to Memorial Day, planned street sweeping within the next one to two weeks, scheduled replacement of water filters beginning the following day, and coordination with Wheatland Waste regarding dumpster placement. Breazeale stated efforts remain focused on completing seasonal maintenance projects and preparing the community for increased summer activity. Five surplus vehicles had been successfully sold, with one remaining surplus vehicle still pending auction.
- E. Police Department** – Police Chief Mike Suniga reported The Police Department's night duty coverage has resumed. There is also a prescription drug drop-off box now available for public use at the police department. The department is working on the badge and patch redesign and additional public outreach information will be posted to Facebook following recent training activities.

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- F. **Fire** – Chief Joel Bell excused.
- G. **Clerk-Treasurer** – Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt reported dog license renewal letters went mailed out and pet owners are coming in to obtain their dog tags. The annual low-income sewer and water reduction letters have been distributed with those eligible also bringing in their updated information. Continued work is being completed with the SS4A representative regarding reimbursement corrections and submission requirements.
- H. **Community Development** – Community Development Director Tom Reese reported there is continued implementation of the Community Heart and Soul project and the transition of fiscal sponsorship responsibilities to the Lions Club. They are scheduling future core team and community meetings. Reese continues to work in collaboration with the Eastern Washington University planning students and with SCJ Alliance on the City's periodic comprehensive plan update. Council then discussed the importance of maintaining progress on planning efforts and ensuring compliance with state periodic update requirements.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comments or business to come before the council, Mayor Yaeger adjourned the remote and in person meeting at 7:45pm.

  
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Michelle Asmussen, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer

  
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Julie Flyckt, Clerk-Treasurer