

**OPENING OF COUNCIL MEETING**

Mayor Pro-Tem Debbie Chapman opened the remote and in person council meeting at 7:00pm. The council members present were Michelle Plumb, Marsha Smith, Mike Schrag, Dennis Chamberlain, Dede Boyer, and Scott Yaeger. Staff members in attendance were Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt, Deputy Clerk Treasurer II Michelle Asmussen (Remote), and City Police Chief Dave McCormick. Public Works Director Dave Breazeale, City Attorney John Kragt, and City Fire Chief Joel Bell were excused. Mayor Linda Kadlec was attending remotely. Also, present were Barry Boyer, Linda Schrag, Jen Verhey, Jessica Quinn, Ben Varela (remotely), Garrett Blauert, and Dale Brown from the Cheney Free Press.

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Pro-Tem Debbie Chapman asked if there were any corrections or additions to the consent agenda. Council Member Marsha Smith made a motion to approve the agenda for December 5th, 2023. Council Member Dennis Chamberlain seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

**PUBLIC REQUESTS AND COMMENTS-** Mayor Pro-Tem Chapman asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment. With no comments, Mayor Pro-Tem Chapman moved on.

**ACTION AGENDA**

- A. Washington Street and Railroad Avenue Street Closure Request-Ritzville Chamber of Commerce-**In the Council's packet is a request from the Chamber of Commerce to close Railroad Avenue, and Washington Street from Main to Railroad, on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the Santa parade and ornament hunt. Council Member Dennis Chamberlain made a motion to approve Railroad Ave and Washington Street to be closed from 11am-2pm for the Santa Parade on Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup>. Council Member Mike Schrag seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
- B. Establishing Fund 302 General Capital Projects, Ordinance No. 2175-** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated at the last meeting it was mentioned to create a fund for the solar project. Flyckt worked with the city's finance consultant Tara Dunford to determine whether to use the current capital improvement program fund or create a new fund. The capital improvement program fund is specific to the REET funding the city receives and has requirements as to how that funding is spent. We hate to create another fund, but Flyckt did some research, and some cities just have a general capital construction fund. Council Member Scott Yaeger asked if there was a way to make it a little more generic to be for any capital project. Flyckt stated she could remove the first whereas statement on the ordinance and make it more generic and she bring it back to the next meeting for approval.
- C. 2024 Final Budget Public Hearing-**The Public Hearing for the 2024 City's Final Budget & Fees was opened at 7:09 by Mayor Por-Tem Chapman. The purpose of the hearing was for the City Council to hear and consider the pertinent facts relating to the city budget and fees. Overall, the 2024 budget impacts include:
  - Minimum wage increase of \$.54 to \$16.18/hour.

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- A 4% Health insurance increase.
- A 3% COLA for all employees except Police Department Chief of Police and Officers wage increase is \$500 per wage step.
- Updated Police Department Records Clerk's job description to include Administrative Assistant duties with a new wage line on the wage scale.
- Abatement line item added to the Current Expense fund in the amount of \$10,000 for the property clean up.
- Community Requests are Gritman Senior Center at \$3,000, ACDC at \$10,000 and RDDA at \$7,000.
- The \$2 million dollar Well #8 pump station project.
- TIB funded projects for crack seal maintenance and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from Division to Palouse.
- Continuance of the general sewer plan, 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, sidewalk project, city's comprehensive plan, and development codes update, and
- The city is still waiting to hear about the grant applications submitted for street planning, cemetery, and sewer plants.

Council Member Dennis Chamberlain stated the Finance Committee was thinking about meeting one more time before the budget is passed. Flyckt stated at the final public hearing to have everything as close to the final budget as possible. Flyckt stated after the final budget public hearing, do not make drastic changes, and stay really close to what it is now. Council Member Dennis Chamberlain stated he would make his comments now and the RD loan is coming in at \$3,136,928, but even with the \$400,000 water project, we are only spending \$2.7K of the RD money so I just wanted people to be aware there is still \$4,036,928 that is unaccounted for in RD funds. Julie stated the \$400,000 left is the projection right now for the reimbursement for the water projects for end of the year in 2023 and 2024 projects. Flyckt stated she asked Ben about the difference, and it is because of the delay in the reimbursement. Usually, you will see expenditures and revenues match, but we are going to have a delay on our reimbursement so there will be more revenue in 2024. Ben Varela stated the budget projection he sent Flyckt is just simply a budget of what we are estimating to be left of the project. It doesn't have anything to do with the loan that's left or the amount on the last outlay, so it really doesn't have anything to do with the projected budget. The estimate he sent to Flyckt is what is being planned for 2024. Flyckt stated the remaining revenue is based on the last outlay report submitted to RD, which is why the numbers are different. Council Member Scott Yaeger stated the only other thing he wanted to note was the 103 fund on the memo, under planning projects there is \$200,000 that needs to be removed since the city did not receive the funding. Flyckt stated she will work with Ben to update the 401 fund and will remove the planning project from the memo. With no further questions, the Mayor Pro-Tem Chapman closed the public hearing at 7:22pm.

- D. Well #8 Pump Station Contract Agreement- POW Contracting-** Ben Varela from Varela and Associates stated at the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting they recommended to award POW the Well 8 pump station project, pending RD approval. Varela has gone through all the paperwork and has worked with the contractor to get the agreements, bonds, and insurance in place to be ready for execution. In the meantime, RD has also concurred with the city to award the contract to POW. At this point everything is in place and ready for the city to go ahead and execute that agreement with POW. Flyckt stated the City Attorney John Kragt has done his review and signed the certificate, which will go with the agreement. Council Member Scott Yaeger made a motion to approve the mayor to sign the contract award documents for Well 8R Pump Station Project. Council Member Mike Schrag seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
- E. Distribution System Project Pay Estimate #4-POW Contracting-** Ben Varela stated the pay estimate #4 for POW is for the water distribution system. This is for water main installation, asphalt paving, and installation of connection details. The work was performed from October 28<sup>th</sup> through November 22, 2023. There will probably be one more pay estimate for a couple weeks of work after this point. The project is basically closed, and there will be a walk through probably next week where we go over a punch list for final clean up items. Council Member Michelle Plumb made a motion to approve Pay Estimate #4 in the amount of \$334,159.59 to POW for the Distribution System Project. Council Member Dede Boyer seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Mayor Pro-Tem Chapman stated the Ritzville Public Development Authority budget request correspondence was provided to council and the request is in the budget.


**MAYOR UPDATES:** Mayor Kadlec stated she didn't have anything at this time but will have something for the next meeting.

#### **DEPARTMENT UPDATES**

- A. Public Works-**Public Works Director Dave Breazeale was out on a fire call and excused.
- B. Police Department-** Chief Dave McCormick stated that Shop with a Cop will be Saturday. Yesterday they were short of funds, but received a donation in the mail and now they are just short of cops. There has been a rash of thefts and burglaries, basically on east 1<sup>st</sup>. The Warehouse office and shop were hit where a couple laptops and a few other things were taken. There were no signs of forced entry, and no evidence was located at the scene. Also, Mike Miller's shop at the edge of town was hit, and it looks like it occurred on the same night. Mostly tools were taken, and it could have been a lot worse than it was. There was a lot of evidence taken, and some prints will go to the crime lab later this week. There have also been some thefts out of cars, basically ones that are not locked. The young man that was very promising to come to work for the police department was through the final hiring stages but came and talked to Chief McCormick last Monday and again this Monday and told him he was seeking a job in another county for a considerable pay increase. Chief McCormick has received another application from a young man who has strong ties to the Ritzville community. He is in the preliminary stages of the background right now and ready to work.

**C. Clerk/Treasurer-** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated the elected officials training is on Saturday and there will be the three newly elected council members and Council Member Dennis Chamberlain attending the training virtually together at city hall. Danielle will be here to set everyone up as Flyckt will be out of town. The training is from 8:30am until 2:30pm. Flyckt is working on updating the capital improvement plan. It is the plan the council saw last year but it will be updated with the current year's information. We still have a lot of work to do on that plan next year and hopefully, we will be able to fill in more information for the following years. Flyckt will have it ready to get out to council members next week to review and then there will be a public hearing at the next meeting. At the next meeting, the new council members and the mayor will be sworn in. There will be ceremonies at the next meeting recognizing newly elected and current council members. Please invite family and friends and whomever you would like to come to the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT-**With no further comments or business to come before the council, Mayor Pro-Tem Chapman adjourned the remote and in person meeting at 7:40pm.



Michelle Asmussen, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer II