

OPENING OF COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Kadlec (remote) opened the remote and in person council meeting at 7:00pm. Council members present were Michelle Plumb, Marsha Smith, Mike Schrag, Dennis Chamberlain, Dede Boyer, Scott Yaeger, and Debbie Chapman. Staff members in attendance were Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt, City Police Chief Dave McCormick, and Public Works Director Dave Breazeale. City Fire Chief Joel Bell and City Attorney John Kragt, and Deputy Clerk Treasurer II Michelle Asmussen, were excused. Also present were Barry Boyer, Charles Jingling, Jessica Quinn, Pete & Diane Spain, Lisa Brody, Jennifer Verhey, and Dale Brown from the Cheney Free Press.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Kadlec asked if there were any corrections or additions to the consent agenda. Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated there were two additional items that were requested to be added to the agenda. One is a street closure from the Chamber that was submitted late today, and Dede Boyer has an addition as well. Council Member Dede Boyer stated the amount of money that was granted to the tree board was way over the top, and she would like to bring the amount down. Council Member Scott Yaeger stated he would like to add under the action agenda the 2023 Rural and Tribal Assistant Pilot Program planning grant that Ardurra is working on. Council Member Mike Schrag made a motion to approve the agenda with the added items for August 15th, 2023. Council Member Dede Boyer seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC REQUESTS AND COMMENTS- Mayor Kadlec asked if there was anyone who would like to make a comment. Charles Jingling who lives at 601 S. Division stated he is a Chamber board member and he wanted to read a request to the mayor and the Ritzville city council members. He stated the Chamber of Commerce is happy to announce the return of the Ritzville Community Parade. As a time, honored tradition, they are looking forward to hosting visitors and residents alike on September 2nd in downtown Ritzville. The Chamber is asking for a street closure and the requested closure would be on Main Ave from Columbia Street to Jefferson Street and Broadway Ave from Jefferson to Division Street on Saturday September 2nd from 6:00am-12:00pm. Division Street will remain open for emergency services. Jessica Quinn from 409 E. Birch Ave stated she just wanted to add on to some comments that happened last meeting regarding nuisance properties. She spoke to Clerk Treasurer Julie Flyckt on the phone, and Flyckt gave her some information about the status of getting someone to come in and clean up the properties. Quinn noticed there were quite a few more properties coming up this week that were going to be voted on and would need to be cleaned up. Quinn did some research with the municipal research and services center online. She went through and selected a few random cities, (Kennewick, Arlington, Spokane Valley & Ritzville) and their nuisance orders. Quinn noticed Spokane Valley had just recently updated their nuisance order and it provides for receivership if properties are chronic nuisances. Quinn would just like to bring it to the councils' attention and have them read it. Quinn feels that it does offer a good idea for these nuisance properties. Lisa Brody from 407 S. Jefferson Street stepped up to the podium and asked why the garbage collection agency does not replace some of the broken crappy garbage cans. She feels they need to be held accountable to the standards of what we are paying them for. Pete Spain from 301 W. 8th Ave stated he had a broken lid on his trash can because it blew over in the wind, then they sent him a bill for \$45. He went out and screwed

the lid back on it. Spain spoke to Rick from Wheatland Waste, and he told Spain someone put something in there and smashed the lid and broke it.

ACTION AGENDA

- A. Street Closure for Parade-** This was discussed in the public requests and comments section by Charles Jingling. Council Member Dede Boyer made a motion to approve the street closure for the parade. Council Member Dennis Chamberlain seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
- B. Show Cause Hearings:** Mayor Kadlec opened the show cause hearings at 7:10pm. The purpose of the hearing was for the City Council to hear and consider the pertinent facts relating to show cause why a resolution should not be adopted, ordering the nuisance abated by the city or its designee with the costs of said abatement being charged against the said landowner. After each testimony was provided for each property, the Council decided whether to either (1) authorize the city clerk to proceed with the administrative abatement procedures to abate the public nuisance violation, which shall include the passing of a resolution or (2) the city council shall direct the city clerk to not proceed if they find that there is no public nuisance violation, or the city has not proceeded according to the nuisance chapter.
- **514 W. Broadway Avenue Property Owner Jessee Kidwell:** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated the conditions that were reported originally on July 6, 2023, were cluttered yard, littered dwelling, tires, scrap piles, tires, debris/material accumulation, building materials, abandoned vehicles, fire hazard, trash, appliances, overgrown grass, and possible noxious weeds. A letter was mailed to the owner on July 6th showing the property was going to be on the show cause hearing dated for August 15th, 2023. The recent photos were taken on August 14, 2023, and nothing has changed on this property. Mayor Kadlec asked if there was anyone there on behalf of the property to make a comment on this property and there was no one present. Council Member Mike Schrag made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2023-09. Council Member Dede Boyer seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
 - **304 E. Dogwood Property Owner John McDonald:** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated on July 6th, 2023, when the original photos were taken the complaint was cluttered yard/littered dwelling, scrap piles, debris/materials accumulation, abandoned vehicles, fire hazard, trash grass and possible noxious weeds. A letter was mailed to the property owner on July 6, 2023, with a show cause date of today. The letter came back undeliverable, and no other known address is on file. There were recent photos taken on August 14, 2023, and nothing has changed other than the season. You can see where it was green, now it is brown. Public Works Director Dave Breazeale said someone had sprayed the weeds, but he was not sure who sprayed them. Mayor Kadlec asked if there was anyone there on behalf of the property to make a comment on this property and there was no one present. Council Member Dede Boyer made a motion to adopt Resolution No 2023-10. Council Member Mike Schrag seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

- **601 N. Palouse Street Property Owner Maria Suarez:** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated on July 6, 2023, the original photos were taken. The nuisance is an abandoned house, fire hazard, overgrown grass, possible noxious weeds, etc. A letter was mailed to the property owner with a show cause date of today listed. Recent photos were taken on August 14, 2023, and nothing has changed except it looks like the grass and weeds are now taller. Mayor Kadlec asked if there was anyone there on behalf of the property to make a comment on this property and there was no one present. Council Member Dede Boyer made a motion to mow the grass down and to adopt Resolution No 2023-11. Council Member Marsha Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
- **704 W. 1st Avenue Pete Spain-** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated there were photos taken on July 10, 2023, and conditions at that time showed a cluttered dwelling with scrap piles, debris/material accumulation, building material, abandoned vehicles, and a fire hazard. A letter was mailed to the property owner on July 10, 2023, with a show cause date for today listed. There were photos taken this August 14, 2023, and the debris and accumulation were reduced in front of the building, and it is more organized. You can actually see there has been a significant amount of work done on it. Public Works Director Dave Breazeale stated he had spoken with Pete Spain, the owner of the property, and he is going to install a fence on the front of the property like council suggested for him to do. Mayor Kadlec asked if there was anyone there on behalf of the property to make a comment. The owner Pete Spain stated he apologizes for not having the fence up yet. He has the poles but has not decide what he is going to use for the fence material. They are running a swap meet out of there and they only have two more scheduled this year, but he is not sure if this is something they will continue to do. Council Member Mike Schrag moved that the council does not move forward with the abatement or the adopting of a resolution at this time. Council member Dennis Chamberlain seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.
- **310 Whittlesey Ralph Eilmes:** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated on June 27, 2023, the original photos were taken. There was a cluttered yard with scrap piles, debris/materials accumulation, building materials, abandoned vehicles, trash, overgrown grass, and possible noxious weeds. A letter was mailed to the owner on July 10, 2023, with a show cause date of today. The photos taken on August 14, 2023, show the equipment has been moved behind the house, but there are no other significant changes. Public Works Director Dave Breazeale stated it is his understanding the front lot belongs to Ralph, but the back lot he has sold to a different individual in town. The front part of the property has been cleaned up significantly and looks good, the back part is still a bunch of abandoned vehicles and motor homes. Ralph is not going to do anything about it because he does not own it, but legally he does since the papers have not been signed yet. Chief McCormick stated he would like to comment on the overall situation as last year there was a show cause for this owner where he lives at 109 W. Cherry. There were a bunch of junk cars there that he works on. He came in and told the council that he would have

that completely cleaned up and all the cars would be off the property, and he would move out of Ritzville and that was September of last year. In Chief McCormick's opinion nothing has been done on that property except maybe a few more junk cars have been moved in there. This is not the case we are dealing with right now, but it shows the history of this gentleman. Council Member Dede Boyer made a motion to proceed with abatement at 310 Whittlesey and adopt Resolution No 2023-12.

Council Member Scott Yaeger seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

- C. 2023 RTAPA Application-** Council Member Scott Yaeger stated the public works committee has been working with Ardurra on the RTAPA application that became available today. The application is for transportation assistance planning. In the city's six-year transportation improvement program priority number five is the SR261 west bound off ramp roundabout. The public works committee requests moving forward to apply for funding for preliminary engineering and environmental conceptual design funding application assistance. The application includes a request of \$200,000 for a feasibility study, environmental and permitting preliminary engineering design and funding, etc. For the main contact for the city, they have added Council Member Scott Yaeger's name, and he is ok with that as long as the council is ok with it, which then requires Yaeger to sign the application in the back. Council Member Scott Yaeger made a motion to approve the 2023 Rural and Tribal Assistant Pilot Program Application. Council Member Mike Schrag seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

- A. Cemetery Fee Increase-**Council Member Mike Schrag stated it has been since 2017 since the city has taken a look at the cemetery fees. The city has been using the cemetery reserve fund like crazy to make up the difference and its time to start charging fees applicable to 2023 and not 2017. The Finance Committee was trying to be reasonable, and not trying to make any money, but trying to come close to breaking even. After looking at wages and hours of the public works crew, the Finance Committee decided that raising the fees to \$175 across the board seemed reasonable. Council Member Dennis Chamberlin stated they have been watching the reserve fund closely and knew at some point they were going to have to do this. Chamberlain does not think they are out of line raising the fees by \$175. Council Member Scott Yaeger stated he did not understand why the increase was not a percentage instead of a flat fee across the board as it would be easier to explain. Schrag said they used the wages and overtime from the public works department to base our decision on the flat amount. Mayor Kadlec stated this will be approved at a later meeting.
- B. 2021 Audit Exit Conference-** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated the 2021 audit is now complete and she is pleased with this audit. The report states the auditor's office would like to bring the following to your attention: they did not identify any material misstatements during the audit. Uncorrected misstatements in the audited financial statements were listed and they agree with management's representation that these misstatements are immaterial to the fair presentation of the financial statements. However, the conditions that led to these misstatements may result in more significant

misstatements if not corrected. The one immaterial item is that the ending balance is understated by \$1,174. In this process they will do an exit item, a management letter, or a finding. An exit item is something to work on, a management letter is something you really need to take seriously, and a finding is when there is something serious. This was the best audit as the city did not receive any of those items.

- C. Tree Board Issues-** Council Member Dede Boyer stated at the last meeting the council spoke about the trees along 1st Avenue. She agrees about putting the trees along there as it will look beautiful and enhance the area. Boyer stated the problem is she never looked at the amount of money that was being asked for until it was voted on. It seems to her the Tree Board should be able to do the project without it costing over \$50,000. Boyer would like to see that amount brought down. Council Member and Tree Board Chair Mike Schrag stated you need to remember that it is not just the trees, as they have the planters that are going to be there, irrigation that needs to be taken care of plus we a maintenance schedule for the trees, so they stay beautiful. The Tree Board is also looking at seed money for Phase 2 & 3 and grant matching funds for the downtown area as well. Schrag stated it was all in the council packet and nobody was trying to hide anything. Council Member Debbie Chapman stated the Tree Board did not want to purchase tiny trees as it is recommended to purchase mature trees, so they have a better chance, as the soil in our area is not the best.

CORRESPONDENCE

In the council packets were the nuisance properties community letter from Rod Larse and an Adams County Development Council Capital Investment Campaign handout.

MAYOR UPDATES

There were no Mayor updates.


DEPARTMENT UPDATES

- A. Public Works-** Public Works Director Dave Breazeale stated POW is in town and are starting to dig potholes for the water distribution project. They will be here until mid-September or October. POW will be digging throughout the town replacing water mains and water valves. Last week there was a water pressure issue, the well failed to call the crew out for failing to start and then it failed to call the crew out for low reservoir water. The phone lines went down, and the crew had no clue about the situation. The Bronco Inn noticed the issue at 12:30am as they could not run their water machines and Breazeale was contacted by Bronco Inn at 5:00am. At that time, he went and fired the well up and it took most of the morning to refill it by 11:00am. Everyone had most of their pressure back by that time. The crew is working on Division and Weber tomorrow and they got the topsoil today. Breazeale anticipates that by the end of this month, they will be able to plant grass there. Council Member Michelle Plumb stated there needs to be two handicap signs placed on the spots that were added on Main east of Division.
- B. Police Department-**Chief Dave McCormick stated they have a Law and Justice meeting tomorrow with the county, which he be attending. The National Night Out is scheduled for August 22nd and they were running low on some volunteers, so if anyone wants to come and volunteer, they will need to be there at 4:30pm on the 22nd. The police

department is going to be cooking hot dogs and hamburgers, which have all been donated. The Eagles stepped up at a meeting last night where Chief McCormick requested some additional help, and they are going to bring two additional cornhole boards and a few people to run the games. They are still planning on a dunk tank as well and the one in Othello raised \$1,000 which this helps to fund these National Night outs. They charged \$1 for 3 balls but there are no volunteers to sit in the dunk tank yet. They will be setting up the movie on the south side of the gazebo and people can bring their chairs to sit in and watch the movie which starts at 7:30pm. The Washington Potato Commission is going to have a French fry trailer there too.

- C. **Clerk/Treasurer-** Clerk-Treasurer Julie Flyckt stated she received notification the city has been awarded a grant contingent upon any protest in their process. The initial awarding of the grant is for the Ritzville Solar Project. It is a predevelopment project not to exceed \$80,500. This is the project Public Works Director Dave Breazeale, Council Members Michelle Plumb and Dennis Chamberlain, and Flyckt submitted with grant writer Jody Opheim. The city's utility billing clerk Danielle and the public works crew did an excellent job during the last billing process as it is the fastest meters have been read and the reread list was very short. Since the reads went so quickly, there is more time to work with Springbrook on why some properties are not exporting to the meter software. During that process they have identified property owners that have turned on their own water and the property owners will be billed for tampering fees and usage of the water they have used. Flyckt is extremely pleased with her staff and all the work they are doing, especially their work updating system processes. The Clerk Department team is going to start meeting on a weekly basis on Friday from 12:00pm-1:00om. City Hall will be closed during that time as it is in the city code that we City Hall can be closed from 12:00pm-1:00pm. The Clerk Department has tried to hold team meetings during working hours, but it does not work well as members of the team are constantly interrupted. The department continues to experience a high volume of work and will need that meeting time to go over what everyone is doing and prioritize the workload. Flyckt is working with Finance Consultant Tara Dunford to review the annual report and there were some items that Flyckt did not have time to complete due to workload, so she is going to complete those as well. The federal audit is supposed to be done by September, but we do not have one scheduled yet. Right now, Flyckt is working to identify if a consultant can help with the workload or if an employee does it. There is a clerk department employee that continues to recover after surgery and Flyckt is looking at bringing in a temporary employee to work five hours a week and up to 10 hours a week over time to help bridge this gap. Flyckt is going on vacation tomorrow and will be back on Wednesday.

ADJOURNMENT-With no further comments or business to come before the council, Mayor Kadlec adjourned the remote and in person meeting at 8:25pm.


Michelle Asmussen, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer II