

Minutes of the General Government and Public Safety Committee meeting of Monday, February 8, 2016.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, David Wilkins at 7:00 p.m. Present also were Mayor Tim Grenke, Aldermen Landon Magley, Dick Ward, Jim Lee and Don Bormann. Also attending were City Administrator Matt Harline, Fire Chief Denny Rusch, Police Chief Larry Dudgeon, Jeff Grimes, Laurie Grimes, Jessica Orsini, Rebekah Kropf, Madeline Flick, Savana Taylor, Beka Tratchel, Ann Tratchel, Alex Hainer, Mary Motley, Mary Kate Sullivan, Alyssa Rackley, Chris Rackley, Angie Rackley, Cheyenne Whithaus, Tanya Whithaus, Jason Whithaus, Chelza Garcia, Sarah Scott, Cydney Hedrick, Emily VanVacter, Tyler Bradley, Daniel De La Rosa, Brandon Hardin and James Smith of the Fireside Guard.

Those present participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Alderman and Mayor Pro-Tem, Jim Lee read the proclamation congratulating the team on their defense of their state title. Lee introduced Rebekah Kropf, Head Coach of the State Champion Centralia High School Varsity Cheerleading squad. Ms. Kropf introduced her assistant coach and members of her squad who were in attendance: Chief Dudgeon asked the cheerleaders to introduce themselves

Comments from Citizens – Daniel De La Rosa complained about “city stakes” placed in the wrong place and tried to clarify statements that he made that suggested the police had done something wrong. He mentioned that it corrupts the City grid.

Police Department

Activity Report: Wilkins asked if there were any questions or comments on the Activity Report. Grenke wanted to compliment the Chief and Officer Bellamy on the excellent job they did recently in their outstanding efforts trying to protect a woman’s property recently. Bormann noted the police phones were out for an hour or so. Chief Dudgeon said that he believed it happened twice this weekend and one time it was for more than an hour. Bormann expressed concern that it had happened more than once. Harline said that Charter had worked with them to allow calls to roll over to a cell phone. Harline noted that this did not in any way involve the 911 system. Wilkins said he remembered doing this and it was for significant savings. In response to a question from Wilkins, Chief Dudgeon said that the cell phone roll over worked, as long as they knew there was an outage and they got the phone active.

Capital Budget Request: Harline stated that \$16,000 is budgeted in case one of the used police cars gets to a point of diminishing returns on repairs. Harline noted that the last one cost \$15,100 but there was offsetting revenue. Harline added that we will not buy a car on April 1 as we have done the last couple of years. Dudgeon said that was correct. Harline said that there was \$5,000 in the budget for a bar code evidence machine. Wilkins asked if the bar code system would be required eventually. Dudgeon said yes, this would bring us up to current evidence standard. Wilkins asked if there was a car that might give up this year to which Chief Dudgeon answered affirmative. Wilkins asked if the current evidence inventory would be bar coded. Chief Dudgeon said that it would, but that it would not include evidence for the Troop murder.

Fire Department

Activity Report: Wilkins asked if there were any questions or comments on the Activity Report. Harline asked about the fire alarm calls, especially if the ones that repeatedly go off. Rusch said that there were no problems that needed additional attention.

Capital Budget Request: Harline noted that the fire truck payment of \$44,333 is the only capital item. He said that they may want to use some of the special tobacco tax revenues where they have about \$6,000, to pay for pagers.

Emergency Management – None.

Protective Inspection

Harline reported that we had seven single family home permits submitted already this year.

Economic Development

CREDI Wilkins noted that there were minutes from the last meeting in the packet. Harline said in answer to a question from Smith (Fireside Guard) that he understood that the CREDI event netted less than \$1,000, closer to \$300, compared to \$3,000 last year. Harline added that the CREDI board had made a point of paying all the vendors to show support for local businesses and that plus smaller attendance cut into the net.

Feasibility Study Update Harline stated that Growth Services Group had completed the study and it was ready for release. Harline said that he would be meeting with a small group of CREDI, and Chamber representatives to put together a group to look for investors. We had one firm interested we know of and it is time for the City's role to diminish and the private sector to take over. In answer to a question from Orsini, Harline stated that CREDI paid for a third of the Feasibility Study, they had hosted a meeting earlier in the year to discuss economic development priorities for the city. Harline added that their meetings are on the fourth Thursday and are open to the public. Orsini asked how often CREDI had a representative at meetings. Harline replied that it had been monthly when Gabe Martinez was President, but now it is more like quarterly. Magley noted that it was more frequent than the Chamber.

Park Board

Wilkins noted that Park Board meeting minutes were in the packet.

Pool improvements update Harline reported that Westport Pools was almost done with the pool. Harline stated that they would be moving to Reinhardt as the contractor and the building of the bathhouse. Harline noted the cooperation between Westport Pools, Reinhardt, Erle Bennet, Mark Mustain and Mike Forsee.

Cemetery Advisory Committee –

No report.

Tree Board – Wilkins noted that there was no report.

Library Board

Wilkins noted that there were minutes and an agenda in packet for the meeting on the 11th

Finance

Financial statements for January 2016 were in the agenda packet. Harline said that last year we made a huge leap in sales tax last year in March and unless that repeats this year, we would end up about even with last year. Harline stated that utility revenues are slightly ahead only and it was not as rosy as he thought a few months ago.

Bills over \$1,250

Wilkins noted that the Committee received a preliminary list of bills over \$1,250. Magley asked about the purchase of three 2-yard dumpsters. Harline said that we buy dumpsters for customers and sell them at cost, but we also needed to replace our two loaner dumpsters. Harline answered in answer to a question from Magley that the expense for truck parts was the repair of Truck 89 that had been damaged in an accident.

Other General Government

General Government Capital Budget Request: Harline said that he was requesting \$3,000 for cameras and DVR equipment to add safety cameras in City Hall but he was waiting on a recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee. Wilkins said that seemed high. Harline added that he make be looking at remote cameras at utility sites. Harline said he also had \$30,000 in the budget for the Comprehensive Plan review with the MMRPC, which is probably more than we need. Harline said there is a chance that some grant revenue may be available if the project overlaps with disaster preparedness.

Downtown Residential Parking: Harline reported that there was a bit of a problem with downtown residents parking in front of businesses, but he felt that we could make some kind of hang tag for these residents to allow them to park in the off-street lot at the SE corner of Allen and Railroad. Harline said that currently the cars get in the way of snow removal and street sweeping. Harline noted that Section 20-9.1 allowed for a written notice. Chief Dudgeon said that he thought the City needed to make sure that the vehicle was properly registered and that they gave proof of residence or possibly if you needed to work overnight. Chief Dudgeon noted that there will be a need to contact the vehicle owners before Anchor Fest. Smith asked about parking his vehicle there. There was a discussion about workers getting permits as well and Chief Dudgeon said the concern right now was residents parking in the downtown area.

Legislative Issues: Harline noted that he had received a call today from the MML and they asked him to come testify against a proposed bill in part due to his physical proximity and it may happen again. Harline said in the end his participation was not necessary he wanted to know if there is a specific protocol. Bormann said sometimes it is not possible to get notice for a specific issue in time to get permission from the Board. Harline suggested that the Committee adopt a list of issues for each session upon which the staff could testify, for instance the proposed laws that would inhibits the City's efforts to assist in bringing high-speed Internet to Centralia. There was discussion among the Committee about addressing the State Legislature. Grenke said that he has no problem going to representing the City in the Capitol but he could see having a process to officially allow him to speak on behalf of the City. Bormann said that he did not have a problem with the City Administrator testifying to the impact something could have on Centralia. Orsini said it was her opinion that Mayor had the permission of the citizens as part of his mandate by being elected. Wilkins said that he would support the idea of having a list of issues upon which staff could speak for the City at the Capitol.

Revised fireworks ordinance: Harline noted that he included in the packet several examples of ordinances that allow for sale of fireworks within the city limits. Harline said that several cities commented that their city did get a little boost of income from allowing the sales inside the city limits. Bormann spoke in favor of proceeding. Wilkins asked the Fire Chief if he was okay and the Chief said it depended on where this was allowed. Harline said it would have to be in B-2 zoning districts. Police Chief Dudgeon said he remembered discussing a limit on the number of permits. Magley noted that one thing they had asked about was having a limit of five permits issued.

Other

Electric Capacity Sale Options: Harline said it was proving more complicated to sell the capacity than originally was thought but he would keep the Board informed.

As May Arise

Chief Dudgeon asked about the State registration for the dog pound. Harline said he had filed it earlier in the day online.

Bormann made a motion to adjourn the Committee meeting. Ward seconded the motion which was then approved by unanimous voice vote at 8:15 p.m.