City Council Workshop - Hybrid (In-Person & Electronic) (Tuesday, February 4, 2025)
Generated by Maryelizabeth Garcia on Monday, February 3, 2025

1. Opening Items.

Procedural: 1.01 Call To Order

Mayor Hernández called the workshop to order at 5:31 PM.

Procedural: 1.02 Roll Call

PRESENT:

Chair -	Mayor, Norma L. Hernández
Council Members -	Paul Jessup; Michael Cleveland; Tito Espinoza Jr.; Loren Peterson; Melodie Williams [arrived 5:35PM]; Heather Schermann;
Staff -	City Administrator, Michael Rizzitiello; Public Works Director Robert McAndrews; Rea Culwell, City Attorney; Brian Carleton, Finance Director; City Clerk, Maryelizabeth E. Garcia.
Also Present -	Steve Nelson, RH2 Engineering; Chris Lee, Walla Walla County Emergency Management;
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	Monica Boyle
MEMBERS ABSENT:	

Procedural: 1.03 Pledge of Allegiance

Information: 1.04 Public Comment - None.

2. Workshop Topics.

Discussion, Information: 2.01 Drinking Water Well #8 Issue - Steve Nelson (RH2 Engineering)

Mr. Nelson introduced himself and described the work RH2 has been doing with the City to include Wells #4,6, and now 8. Mr. Nelson gave a summary of the physical attributes of Well #8, described the location selection, and the process for drilling the well. Once the well was drilled to the standard 800 feet, a pump was installed to see how the well would produce. Mr. Nelson described what conditions are normal to find at a well site and what was actually discovered at Well #8: silt, sand, and thin layers of basalt; the water was muddy and clogged up the well screen. Additionally, the well produced roughly 150-200 gallons/minute which is not adequate compared to the expected drawdown of 1000 gallons/minute. Mr. Nelson informed Council of several options to fix the well screen, and indicated his recommendation to continue the project instead of starting a new well elsewhere until all options have been exhausted.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion, Information: 2.02 Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan - Mr. Chris Lee

Mr. Lee introduced himself and identified the multi-jurisdictional partners in the region who contributed to the Countywide Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Mr. Lee identified several reasons for having an updated HMP including eligibility for FEMA grants. Mr. Lee stated that the primary goal of the HMP is to reduce risk due to natural hazards and future disasters; Mr. Lee identified the primary risks to the region as floods, severe weather, earthquakes, and wildland fires. The HMP works loosely alongside emergency response plans and includes measures for animals.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion, Information: 2.03 FY 2025 Community Grants - Mr. Rizzitiello

Mr. Rizzitiello reviewed Community Grant Applications with Council. This year, there were 8 applications, six of which got funding at this time. Council Member Jessup disputed the decision on the CPHS grant; Mayor Hernandez agreed to review the grant and allow Council Member Jessup to provide further explanatory details about the grant submission. Council Member Cleveland suggested, as capacity allows, providing feedback to applicants.

Discussion ensued.

Discussion: 2.04 District Court Services Evaluation - Ms. Culwell

Ms. Culwell informed the council of the City's letter of intent to terminate District Court Services with the County. Ms. Culwell described the City's intent to perform a feasibility study on bringing municipal court back in-house and informed Council of next steps. Council Member Williams requested information on how much the City currently spends on contracting with the County.

Discussion: 2.05 Agreement with Valley Transit to Coordinate capital and Public Works projects - Ms. Culwell
Ms. Culwell described the process for arriving at the proposed interlocal agreement with Valley Transit and stated the intent of the contract, which is to allow Valley Transit the opportunity to perform work on transit stops when the City is working on a road. Contingent upon Public Works availability and capacity, Public Works department will be paid by Valley Transit to perform the work on transit stops as part of the overall project. One of the possible issues with the contract is the inability of both organizations to indemnify each other for work. Mayor Hernandez and Council Member Schermann stated they both serve on the Valley Transit Board but did not see a conflict of interest. Council Member Espinoza requested mutual indemnification if Public Works performs work on Valley Transit projects, and requested a shelter be placed at bus stops around the city. Council Member Schermann clarified that mutual indemnification would be agreeable to Valley Transit.

Discussion ensued.

3. Closing Items.
Discussion, Information: 3.01 Good of the Order

Procedural: 3.02 Conclusion

Mayor Hernández concluded the workshop at 7:19 PM.

Approved:

Signed by:
Norma Hernández
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Norma L. Hernández – Mayor

Attest:

Signed by:
Maryelizabeth Garcia
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Maryelizabeth E. Garcia - City Clerk

The foregoing minutes are the official record of the City Council Workshop that occurred February 4, 2025. Further detail may be obtained by reviewing the actual audio recording made during this session.