

THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED BY THE BURNS CITY COUNCIL

Burns City Council

May 12, 2021

The Burns City Council met in regular session on May 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Members present were as follows:

Mayor: Jerry Woodfin
Councilors: Jen Keady
Jen Hoke
Heather Smith
Judy Erwin
Christy Rivera
Brad Herrera

Also, in attendance were City Manager Dan Brown, Police Chief Newt SkunkCap, Public Works Director Michael Berry, Utility Worker Matt Renfro, Utility Worker Emerson Budro, Fire Chief Scott Williamson and Municipal Judge/City Clerk Dawn Crafts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jackie Clements of 620 N. Diamond was present and asked that the City of Burns look at Baker City’s Common Sense Sanctuary Resolution No. 3881. The Baker City Council approved the resolution blaming Gov. Kate Brown’s COVID-19 mandates for creating an “economic, mental health, and criminal activity crisis” in the city. The resolution will allow businesses to open up and use common sense when it comes to masks and social distancing. She stated that they have made nationwide news because of it and other cities are jumping on board.

She stated that we could do a similar resolution and it would be a huge step in the right direction to protect our way of life.

AGENDA APPROVAL AND LATE ADDITIONS

Mayor Woodfin added a Grant Agreement for Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Activities to New Business.

Councilor Herrera moved to approve the agenda with the addition. Councilor Erwin seconded. All ayes.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Regular Meeting Minutes – April 28, 2021
 - B. Workshop Meeting Minutes – April 15, 2021
2. April 2021 – Bills List

Councilor Herrera moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilor Erwin seconded. All ayes.

CITY MANAGER/DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS

City Manager Brown reported the following:

- The next city council strategic planning workshop will be held at City Hall on May 18th from 4 – 8 pm.
- The new flooring in the council chambers will be started next week.
- 1st Budget Committee Meeting will be held on May 20th from 5:30 – 8:30 pm and a 2nd meeting on May 21st if needed.
- Public Works Director Michael Berry would like input on paint scheme for new roofs and paint jobs on the well houses and bathrooms. Council liked the colors he showed them.

CM Brown mentioned that #1 well building will need to be replaced soon.

- Need feedback on potential stakeholder meeting for ODOT improvement projects.
 - a. Truckers, ranchers, farmers, Chamber of Commerce Board, Downtown Business Owners, etc. Please email him any names you have.
- Public Works Director Michael Berry introduced two new public works employees, Matt Renfro and Emerson Budro.

Matt Renfro introduced himself as well and stated that he and his family moved here from Harrisburg, OR because his wife is from Burns and was ready to come home. He also stated that he worked for the City of Harrisburg for 7 years and holds many water/sewer state certificates.

Emerson Budro introduced himself and stated that he moved here from the Willamette Valley and loves it here. He stated that he served two tours in Iraq and Afghanistan for the Army and just moved here a year ago. He is very excited to work for the city.

The council welcomed Matt and Emerson.

- Chief Williamson reported that he received notice that the fire department has been awarded the 2021 Wildland Prevention and Preparedness Grant in the amount of \$20,043.43 to purchase new handheld radios and the ODF-VFA Grant in the amount of \$9,950 to purchase practice fire shelters, real fire shelters, thermo imaging cameras, boots, head lamps and training.

Mayor Woodfin thanked Chief Williamson for his hard work and time he puts in for these grants.

- CM Brown reported that he and Police Chief SkunkCap are working on a grant to fund a couple of police officers. He stated that the national average for police officers in communities less than 10,000 people is 2.5 officers per one thousand people which means that we should have at least 6 officers for 24 hour coverage. This would also allow the Chief more time to work on administrative issues such as reports and writing grants.

He also stated that Fire Chief Williamson has set the bar high as far as getting grants. Hats off to him.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Harney Partners for Kids and Families – Donation Request – Bettina Bowman was present and explained that they are working with the Department of Human Service and CASA to help recognize and support our local Foster Parents for all the help they provide the displaces children in our county.

She stated that there are currently 25 Foster Homes in Harney County with 41 children in foster care. They would like to put together 25 gift baskets for the foster parents to show their appreciation. People can donate items for the baskets, gift card, money etc.

Julie Beitzel, who was attending the council meeting via Zoom stated that she would like to donate \$500.00.

Mayor Woodfin moved to donate \$250 to Harney Partners for Kids and Families to help with gift baskets for the foster homes. Councilor Herrera seconded. All ayes.

2. 4th of July Parade – Amie Scott with the City of Hines was present and stated that the Chamber of Commerce is no longer going to do any events other than Skull 120 so the City of Hines is going to take of the 4th of July festivities at the Hines Park. She asked if the City of Burns would be willing to take over the parade. She stated that she doesn't want to see it die.

Mayor Woodfin stated that the city employee that put on the Christmas Parade did an excellent job so maybe we can talk to the employee about it.

Councilor Erwin stated that Roy and Dawn Crafts are the ones that put the Christmas Parade on.

Councilor Keady suggested Amie talk to the Main Street Task Force as well. She stated that the City of Burns shouldn't have to take it all on.

There was some discussion.

CM Brown will discuss it with city staff first and get their feedback.

3. American Legion – Burns Community Calendar – No one was present from American Legion.
4. Stanley Simmons – Hazmat Reports and Handicap Permits – Stanley Simmons, 797 E. Adams, was present and asked why no asbestos reports were being done before demolishing old buildings such as the Central Hotel and the Palace buildings. He stated that they are old buildings and are full of asbestos. He stated that the fire department has to get these reports done before they can burn buildings.

He stated that he knew of some people that were interested in the old Palace building but didn't buy it because of the asbestos.

Councilor Erwin stated that both buildings had all the necessary permits that were required. She stated that they are handled buy the County Building Inspector not the city.

Stan stated that the city needs to be aware because when these demolitions are taking place you have asbestos flying around in the air.

There was some further discussion.

CM Brown asked Mr. Simmons to bring any documentation he has for him to review.

5. Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Activities Grant Agreement – Fire Chief Scott Williamson was present to ask for approval to sign and enter into an agreement for this grant from the Oregon State Fire Marshall in the amount of \$20,043.43 to be used for replacing old handheld radios with new P25D and field programmable radios.

Councilor Keady moved to allow Chief Williamson to sign and enter into an agreement for the Wildfire Prevention and Preparedness Activities Grant in the amount of \$20,043.43 to purchase P25D radios. Councilor Erwin seconded. All ayes.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Susan Ohlund, 797 E. Adams, was present regarding her proposed street right of way vacate that was denied at the last council meeting. She stated that she spoke with her attorney and he agreed that when she spoke to the past city council, they gave her permission to move forward but then this council denied it. She stated that the city has vacated other roads in the past and then there are those people that are just using city right of way that has never been vacated and they didn't have to pay the city \$500. She presented a map showing some of these properties.

She stated that because the past council was in favor of her request, she spent money for the survey and the filing fee.

Councilor Erwin stated that she was part of the council that told them to go ahead with the application, so she does understand her concern now. She stated that that portion of North Hemlock has never been a road and never will be and it's not right that the old council told her to go ahead and then this council is against it.

Mayor Woodfin stated that that is his stand as well because she came before the council back in November of 2020 and was told to move forward. He understands that we want to save streets but some of them can't go anywhere.

He stated that this property was an eyesore for years until Stan and Susan moved in there and cleaned and maintained it. He stated that his only concern was giving property to an abutting property owner who is not paying property taxes on the property they already own. Councilor Herrera agrees and stated that this is why at the last meeting he asked to table the decision until the next meeting. He stated that he has looked at the property and the trees won't even allow a street to be put in.

Councilor Erwin stated that the past taxes would have to be paid before the vacate could be recorded anyways.

Susan stated that they were going to help them with the back taxes.

There was some further discussion.

CM Brown stated that if they want to change anything he will contact the city attorney to see if we would have to start the whole process over again.

Mayor Woodfin tabled this matter until CM Brown can consult with the city attorney.

Stan Simmons thanked the council and stated that they just want something done one way or the other.

2. Washington Park Restrooms – CM Brown provided the council with pictures and floor plans of prefab buildings to look at and give him feedback on.

He stated that these buildings are concrete and will last a long time and right now cost the same as a stick built building and they look like wood.

COUNCIL COMMENTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Rivera reported that they held a Safety Committee meeting on April 29, 2021 and did a walk through of the Burns Fire Department. She stated that Chief Williamson gave a very thorough and informative tour. She stated that they learned that one of the fire trucks is 26 years old and is supposed to be replaced after 25 years. She also reported that new air packs are on the way and they're still working on ways to replace the rest. She stated that the only real concern they heard from him was that it's getting harder and harder to recruit and retain volunteers.

Councilor Erwin reported that they held an Airport Committee meeting and discussed using the \$9,000 grant for remodeling the terminal. They also discussed water/plumbing issues and the need for new revenue streams.

Councilor Hoke stated that the high school graduation will be held on Saturday, May 22 at 1:00 p.m. followed by a street parade. She invited everyone to attend.

Councilor Erwin asked how long we are going to continue to allow the old service station next to the Burns Town Apartments to park cars and trash the place.

CM Brown will send out a letter.

Mayor Woodfin read aloud a thank you card from the Senior Center for sponsoring the Entrée Program.

There was no further discussion.

The next meeting will be held on May 26, 2021

ADJOURN

Councilor Herrera moved to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Councilor Erwin seconded. All ayes.