

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 28, 2022
6:00

NOTE TO PERSONS REVIEWING THIS DOCUMENT: THIS IS NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT. WHILE AN ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO DOCUMENT PERTINENT POINTS, THESE MINUTES CONTAIN ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION AND VOTING

Mayor Valerie Rogers called the December 28, 2022 regular council meeting to order at 6:04 at the Community Center. This meeting was originally scheduled for December 20th but was adjourned due to lack of a quorum to December 27th, which was again adjourned to December 28 due to lack of quorum.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Town Council members present were Steven Walk, David Rafferty and Emily Thomas. Alisha Anderson was absent. Others present were Amanda Blood, Richard Ralidis, Devin Billington and Cheryl Loeffler.

Roadside memorial

Nicole Martin had sent an email asking council permission to place a memorial at or near the site her fiancé was killed. Her example was that of a memorial bench, possibly to be placed in the park. The council wants her to be asked who will be responsible for the upkeep throughout the years, how will whatever type they decided on be secured to avoid theft or vandalism, what type of material will it be made of. Cheryl will reach out to her.

Old Business

Council appointment

The council would like to have the vacant seat posted with the closing date of January 13th with appointment on January 17th.

Old Fashioned Christmas

Amanda Blood reported that overall, the Old-Fashioned Christmas went over great, a little low on shoppers but the vendors seemed pleased. There were some comments about the smaller size of the booths. In order to accommodate so many vendors, they had to reduce them from 10x10 to about 8x8. It was suggested that the vendor form be changed to state this upfront. The band students ran the crafts downstairs as well as sold hot chocolate. The craft area was shut down early due to lack of participation.

Santa was at the "What-a-Kitchen" this year and not at the bank, which was new. Attendance there was slow as well. Thoughts are that it might take a few years to build the event back up after the pandemic. There were several sports activities going on that took the kids away from the event as well.

Amanda thanked Cheryl for helping her to get things set up and organized.

Tree Lighting

Pleasantly surprised with the amount of people that showed up. The choir from Liberty was a very nice addition. The tree was beautiful as well as the lights on the gazebo. The plan is to leave the lights up until New Year's. She will be meeting with the Service Club to schedule the tear down. Amanda thanked the town council for providing the budget to do this and to the public works staff for making sure that the roads and park was accessible for everyone.

Food Bank Lease

The lease has been revised per the attorney suggestions. It states that the everyday maintenance such as lightbulb changing, is left to the members of the food bank (lessee) but that the wording should be more specific stating that the town (lessor) would be responsible for any structural damage or repairs not caused by neglect or physical abuse by the lessee. The monthly fee was also discussed and it was felt that the \$100 should be lowered.

ACTION

Steven Walk moved to make the rent fee for the North Palouse Community Food Bank \$50 a month and to add the verbage to the lease that the lessor is responsible for any structural damage not caused by any intentional or negligent acts by the lessee; seconded by Emily Thomas. The motion was approved 3-0.

Ordinance #400 - 2022 Budget Amendments

Cheryl presented the 2022 budget amendment for the council to review. There were two formatting changes pointed out.

ACTION

Emily Thomas moved to approve Ordinance #400-2022 Budget Amendment #1 with the formatting changes; seconded by David Rafferty. With no further discussion, the motion was approved 3-0.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR Ordinance #401 - 2023 Final Budget

Mayor Rogers opened the public hearing at 6:40.

Question: Are the interfund transfers recorded?

Answer: Yes. They are tracked.

Cheryl noted that a payment of \$35,237 for the sprinkler system for the Pit project was made in 2022 but those funds have not been reimbursed at this time, which makes the General Fund look lower than it should be. Those funds will be added into the beginning balance of the 2023 budget.

With no other comments or questions, Mayor Rogers closed the public hearing at 7:15.

ACTION

Emily Thomas moved to approve Ordinance #401 – 2023 Final Budget; seconded by Steven Walk. The motion was approved 3-0.

New Business

Utility bill reduction request

The building at 204-210 Main Street had three separate businesses but is one building with three separate utilities. The current owner is renovating two of the businesses and lives in one. There are two people living in the one area with very little water or sewer usage. He has the water turned off in the other two with the sinks and toilets taken out. The property owner sent an email to the council asking to change the way the utilities are charged to just one utility instead of three separate ones.

The council would like the property owner to present what the intentions are for the building and what kind of a timeline is he thinking before any decision can be given.

Utility hardship grants

The council earmarked \$5000 of the ARPA funds for utility hardship grants up to \$500. These grants are different than the CARES Act hardship grants that non-essential businesses were able to apply for early in the pandemic. The fund is placed as "Project Share" line item.

Two residents have applied for some financial aid, one for \$385 and one for \$500.

ACTION

Emily moved to approve the utility hardship applications for \$385 and \$500 with the funds to be applied directly to the applicants utility account; seconded by David. The motion was approved 3-0.

Public Works Report

Sewer

- WW manhole Hilltop Lane
- Right now, there is approximately 280,000 gallons stormwater flowing

Streets

- Sidewalk on McNeil.
- Sanding truck conversion finishing up for now, tank to come expected in May.
- Snow plowing, widening roads and applying ice melt.

Water

- Water leak at WWTF
- Water leak Prairie View

Approval of the Minutes from December 6, 2022 2022 regular council meeting

ACTION

Steve moved and David seconded to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2022 regular council meeting as read. The motion was approved 3-0.

Approval of the December 28 2022 Claims

Emily moved and Steve seconded to approve the December 28, 2022 claims with EFTs for \$12,974.41 and checks # 21111-21126 for \$89,182.62. The motion was approved 3-0.

	12-28-2022
Claims	\$80,729.87
Payroll	21,427.16
Total Paid	\$102,157.03

Signed by Steven Walk, David Rafferty and Emily Thomas

Other

Cheryl provided each council member an ACH sign up sheet. It is not mandatory that they sign up for this but it is a matter of convenience.

Valerie has been researching different agenda styles that are used in towns comparable in size to Fairfield. She would like to add at least one public comment section. The council agrees that it would be a good idea to add. There would be guidelines that have to be followed. This will be implemented with the first meeting in January.

Another change is to have one of the council members make a motion to adjourn each meeting and to excuse absences the day of the absence unless the reason of the absence is unknown.

Compliments/Complaints

Steve complimented public works for doing such a good job with plowing and keeping the streets open.

Valerie commented on the new meters. Cheryl had sent a text to her questioning the unusual amount of water used in an hour. They were home when she received the text and were already working on their problem but it would have been helpful if they had not been home to receive notification and could get some emergency help there to avoid excessive damage. Cheryl notified four different addresses over Christmas of potential issues.

Dates to Remember

Dec 29 Cheryl off
JAN 2 OFFICE CLOSED FOR NEW YEAR'S

Adjourn:

With no further business, the council meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.


Valerie Rogers, Mayor


Cheryl Loeffler, Clerk/Treasurer