



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Irrigon City Council Meeting

December 16, 2008

7:00 PM

Irrigon City Hall

500 NE Main Avenue

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Mayor James Ray called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Mayor Ray called everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Members present: Robert Flournoy, Mayor Pro-Tem Jack Johns, Harold Poeling, Eleanor Partridge and David Burns. Council Ken Matlack was not present.

Staff members present: City Manager Gerald Breazeale, and Public Works Director Keith White. Utility Billing Clerk Penny Moore was not present. Amy Sandy volunteered to take notes in her absence.

Citizens present: David Wood, Gloria Wood, Melinda Dennis, Josie Foster, and Andrew Sorenson.

2. Comments from Citizens not on the Agenda – Max. 5 Minutes/person

Mayor James Ray announced that Daniel Pettigrew serving in the Army is returning from his tour in Iraq and he is being reassigned in the United States. The City of Irrigon will be honoring Daniel Pettigrew with a plaque at noon tomorrow, December 17, 2008. All are invited to attend.

Citizen Melinda Dennis asked to be heard, stating that she had some concerns. Ms. Dennis stated that she runs Miller Crossing and owns a home here in Irrigon. Ms. Dennis stated that she has heard rumors about another project to begin and that water rates would be going up. Mayor Ray stated that he did not know of any new project to raise the water rates. City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that there had been a public hearing to explain the water rate increase to get the city a grant. The reason is to pay the city loan. The main thing is that the city has to pay for operating costs and the loan repayment. Manager Breazeale continued to state that different funding alternatives could raise the taxes to the citizens; Irrigon voters approved a 2 million dollars tax levy. The present rate structure is not sufficient to cover the city's operating costs and loan amounts.

Ms. Dennis stated that she believes Irrigon has the highest water rates. City Manager Breazeale stated this was not accurate and that he would be happy to print a copy of the rates of the surrounding areas. Mr. Breazeale is proposing an increase of \$2 on the base water rate which is \$12 presently, this would make the

rate \$14 and the rate would be the same cost per thousand until 7500 gallons, then from that point the cost per thousand would go from 90 cents for 1000 gallons to \$1.25 for 1000 gallons, if usage is more than 7500 gallons a month then it is about a 28% increase on the average.

City Manager Gerald Breazeale provided the loan amount of about 3 million and the grant amount of about 1.7 million. Continuing, Mr. Breazeale stated that there were no new projects, and the high school sewer project has nothing to do with a possible rise in water rates. Mayor James Ray stated that there will always be projects in the works. Public Works Director Keith White stated that the city received tippage fees to connect and extend a sewer line to Irrigon High School.

Councilor David Burns brought up the matter of the city having to pay to clean up nitrates that farmers caused through fertilizer which were cleaned up with the \$4 million dollars for the new wells. Mayor Ray responded saying that the city was told by the state to clean the nitrates up.

Ms. Dennis stated that having a business is hard and she wants to protect the future of Irrigon and that the only way to stay and build her business is to come to the council meetings and learn what is going on through first hand communication.

3. Approval of Minutes – November 18, 2008 Council Meeting

Councilor Harold Poeling moved to accept the minutes. Councilor Eleanor Partridge seconded the motion. The motion to accept the November 18, 2008 minutes passed unanimously.

4. Correspondence

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that the correspondences were mostly informative. All of the grants were turned down and the city was asked to try again next year. Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that all of the city's applications were good; however, it was stated that there were other deserving applicants that received the grant money.

Mayor James Ray stated that a correction needed to be made to the city manager's report which stated that Senator Greg Smith, instead of Senator Gordon Smith was noted.

5. Water Improvement Project – Partial Pay Request No. 7

City Manager Gerald Breazeale reported that the city received the application for partial pay request no.7 was too late to be included in the councilor's packet, stated also that the application for payment had been approved by the engineer. The payment amount is \$244,649.66, which will bring the contractor to 79% completion.

Councilor Bob Flournoy moved to approve the partial payment to Swaggart Brothers. Councilor David Burns seconded the motion. The motion to approve partial payment to the contractors passed unanimously.

Change order no. 1 for \$62,744.50 included the crossover piping at the existing reservoir site which was included to get the nitrate levels low. The pressure switch at the new site actually works with the new reservoir. New valves replaced deteriorated valves that were failing during new piping tie-ins to the existing

system. Work was performed on the street asphalt restoration. The location of an existing system leak was evaluated. The contractor excavated and temporarily repaired existing valves. Mayor Pro-Tem Jack Johns made the motion to approve change order no 1. Councilor Harold Poeling seconded the motion. The motion to approve change order no. 1 passed unanimously.

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated Dave Wildman could not be here tonight to talk about possible future change orders. Manager Breazeale explained future changes to the council. Number 4 on the list of pending change orders were also addressed first, an additional pavement restoration on Highway 730 based on potholing and actual utility locations. Addition of an air release manhole slope protectors, reservoir sampling station, and well number 3 pump station retaining wall is needed. More work is needed for the reservoir drain pond. Change order number 1 addresses additional valve installations, interim operations, and monitoring panel revisions. Public Works Director Keith White stated that the present project is slowing because of the valves literally breaking at many locations. These pending change order items anticipated construction costs are \$210,000 to 345,000; the costs are preliminary estimates and have not been confirmed with the contractor.

6. Needs and Issues Awards

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that Morrow County Court met on November 12, 2008 to allocate Tippage Fees. The City of Irrigon was awarded \$40,000 for sewer infrastructure. The converted septic system will be from Greenwood Avenue up to Wyoming Avenue and picks up at the high school. This project would be equal to 37 houses being put on the system. Mayor James Ray stated that this helps feed the sewer system.

Manager Breazeale stated that more lift stations were needed and in the future additional lift stations will be required, the cost of each is 150,000 at this time, increasing in the future. The city is trying to convert as many on the system as possible.

7. Amendment to Wastewater Master Plan and System Development Charge Plan

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that this refers to the high school sewer extension and line extensions located on Third and Fourth Streets north of Utah Avenue.

Councilor Harold Poeling made the motion to amend the wastewater master plan. Councilor Eleanor Partridge seconded the motion. The motion to amend the wastewater master plan passed unanimously.

8. Relocation of Recycle Bins

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that the planning commission approved moving the recycle station from the current location to west of the senior center and just east of Fred Clark's garage. Tippage fees were received two years ago to move the recycle station. The recycle station move is a result of council action back in 2005 and was reinstated in 2007. Manager Breazeale stated that it does not cost anything to move the bins, and making the area attractive is important to the citizens of Irrigon. A water line needs to be put in before any landscaping can be done at the new site.

Andrew Sorenson that lives on Jewell Drive expressed his objections to moving the recycle station from the present site. Mr. Sorenson asked why the recycle station couldn't be moved behind the convenient store.

Manager Breazeale stated that the property behind the convenient store is not city property. Mr. Sorenson asked if anyone had come forward and donated land to the city for the recycle station. Manager Breazeale stated that no one had donated land for the recycle station. Mr. Sorenson stated his frustration in that he has witnessed people taking aluminum cans out of the bins.

9. Downtown Planning Project

Manager Breazeale gave an update for a meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee that will be on the January 14, 2009 city council agenda and a public meeting will be held January 15, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. Manager Breazeale hopes that the city will get good public participation at the public meeting as public support will be critical to the success of the project.

10. Irrigon Urban Growth Boundary

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that in 1992 the Morrow County Planning went through a process to withdraw lands from the Irrigon Urban Growth Boundary. The city has been told by various sources that the process may not have been legal. Before this evolved, the city brought sewers to this area to fix the problems. Manager Breazeale asked the council "how do you want to approach this issue, does the city want to put in a notice to the State that we question that action?" The county and the city need to work cooperatively to reinstate the UGB and find a proper area.

Manager Breazeale stated that the new planning commission members would like to renew the agreement. Mayor James Ray stated that the UGB are areas reserved for cities to further growth. This is a legal requirement for cities to plan for.

Councilor David Burns asked the mayor why the city doesn't have the county fix this situation. Mayor Ray stated that this will probably be the circumstance. City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that sufficient land must be reserved for at least a 20 year growth of a city. The UGB requires a joint agreement between the city and the county involved. Until it is annexed into the city it is still county land.

11. Request to Authorize Broader Use of the Skateboard Fund

City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that the skateboard fund is a personal project of Mayor James Ray. Mayor Ray has tried to involve students in city type issues and the most recent issue for the students is a poster contest that has to do with our new water system. Mayor Ray wants to expand the use of funds from the skateboard fund to other areas. The council only authorized the monies in the skateboard fund for skate boards. Mayor Ray wants to use the funds any time there is a connection between the city and education or promotional rewards for outstanding achievement or interest. The skateboard fund is strictly from donations.

Manager Breazeale proposed that next year there will be a line item in the city budget; making the skateboard fund a city fund and that people could make the donation for a specific purpose.

Councilor Harold Poeling made the motion to change the verbiage to allow the expanded use of the skateboard fund for recognition of students that have ties with the city of some nature. Councilor Eleanor Partridge seconded the motion. The motion to change the verbiage to allow the expanded use of the skateboard fund for recognition of students that have a tie with the city of some nature passed unanimously.

12. Report from the Morrow County Sheriff

There were no questions from the council.

Councilor Harold Poeling made the motion to accept the Morrow County Sheriff's report. Mayor Pro-Tem Jack Johns seconded the motion. The motion to accept the Morrow County Sheriff's report passed unanimously.

13. Staff Reports

Public Works Director Keith White presented a proposal for an important need for a new standby generator for one of the city's major lift stations that does not have standby electrical capabilities. During severe weather this lift station is a huge burden. Mr. White continued with the estimated cost of \$14,000. City Manager Gerald Breazeale stated that the funds are available in the sewer reserve.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jack Johns made the motion to approve purchase of the standby generator. Councilor Bob Flournoy seconded the motion. The motion to approve purchase of the standby generator passed unanimously.

Councilor Harold Poeling made the motion to accept all three of the staff reports. Councilor Bob Flournoy seconded the motion. The motion to accept all three of the staff reports passed unanimously.

14. Accounts Payable

Councilor Harold Poeling made the motion to approve and pay the accounts payable bills. Councilor Bob Flournoy seconded the motion. The motion to approve and pay the accounts payable bills passed unanimously.

15. Additional Discussion

City Manager Gerald Breazeale addressed the council regarding the surplus file cabinets that were donated to the city by the USDA. Manager Breazeale's request was for Amy Sandy of the Irrigon Irrigator to have one of the cabinets used for storing files.

Councilor Harold Poeling made the motion to donate two of the file cabinets to the Irrigon Irrigator. Councilor Bob Flournoy seconded the motion. The motion to donate two of the file cabinets to the Irrigon Irrigator passed unanimously.

City Manager Gerald Breazeale addressed the council regarding his status of living in Heppner and as far as he knew it was not required for the city manager to move to Irrigon. Manager Breazeale asked the council what their preference was.

Councilor Eleanor Partridge made the motion that the city manager does not have to live in Irrigon at this time. Councilor David Burns seconded the motion. The motion that the city manager does not have to live in Irrigon at this time passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro-Tem Jack Johns stated that he would like to commend Finance Officer Brandy McNamee on doing an impressive job on the financial reports.

At this time Councilor David Burns gave a report after talking to Chris Diamond of the Oregon Department of Energy, State of Oregon, stating that Irrigon has the lowest electric costs in the state of Oregon, making it more difficult to justify a project on the water treatment plant. Mr. Diamond stated that Irrigon would have a better chance of getting a grant for solar energy if electric cost were higher; Pendleton pays two cents a kilowatt an hour more than Irrigon. Mr. Diamond suggested that the city apply for the second round of Demonstration Grants awarded by the Department of Energy to be held in March, the first round has been completed.

Mr. Diamond would help the city in deciding what type of project would be most appropriate in order to be strongly considered for a Demonstration Grant.

Councilor Burns stated that applying for a demonstration grant for city hall would be easily identified by the public that would be good for Irrigon and the city would not have to pay back any monies awarded, that would open up the idea of installing a photovoltaic array on city hall. Councilor Eleanor Partridge asked how this would affect the community. Councilor Burns stated that a demonstration project would say to the community, "look we are doing it, its working."

Adjournment - There being no further business before the council at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Next Regular Meeting Date – January 20, 2008

If you would like to attend and need assistance, please call Irrigon City Hall at 1.541.922.3047 or TTY relay 1.800.735.2900

Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest