

City of Othello
Council Workshop
March 1, 1999

Mayor E R Kelley called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmembers present were Everett Cole, Les Clemons, Donald Derifield, Jeannie Ochoa and Samuel Garza. Absent with cause were Leonard Lyon and Eleanor Brodahl. Others present were Debbie Kudrna, Debra Travis, Curt Andrews, and Bill McDonell, Department Heads; and Bill Shaw, City Administrator.

E-911 CONTRACT AND JAIL CONTRACT

Police Chief McDonell explained the City and County had entered into two contract in 1998 for dispatch and jail services. The County Commissioners had executed new contracts earlier that day for 1999, with changes in the dispatch and jail services charges. These new rates are still below the state average; it had been agreed upon to include gradual increases in both contracts over a three year period to bring them up to the state average. He explained that neither of the fees address personnel costs involved with the actual services. Both entities have agreed to analyze other alternatives and discuss long range planning for these services.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

City Administrator Bill Shaw introduced Debbie Sanchez, recently hired as the Recreation Coordinator. He explained that due to the budget in the recreation department, the coordinator's hours were reduced to approximately 550 hours per year. He and Ms Sanchez had been discussing her duties and what changes could be made to the department. Ms Sanchez stated she had met with the Little League and Bambino League and discussed the possibility of eliminating the city ballfield maintenance employee. She proposed to the leagues that they be responsible for ballfield maintenance and litter control, which would eliminate the fee paid by them for the service provided by the city. This would also create a savings to the recreation budget of approximately \$9,000.00. The leagues were concerned of liability issues, especially when using the pressurized watering system. Mr Shaw agreed this was a legitimate concern, and stated the Public Works staff had discussed the possibility of laying an underground sprinkler system for watering down the fields. He did suggest an agreement be drawn up to address the liability issues, and the requirement for the leagues to be responsible for ballfield preparation and trash pickup. Councilmember Cole expressed a concern of fields being left in unplayable states. Another option is for the city to into a contract with someone to maintain the fields.

Ms Sanchez then explained the proposed changes for obtaining the concession stand health permit. In the past, the city had obtained the health permit. She proposed that the leagues obtain the permit and assume the responsibility of food handling. Another possibility is having a contract with a concessionaire, who would be responsible for selling products at the concession stand. This would allow the concession stand to be opened more frequently and a percentage could be paid to the leagues. Concerns were voiced about it being in competition of local businesses. This will be explored further.

COLUMBIA STREET

Building Official, Curt Andrews discussed the development of Columbia Street from 1st Avenue east to 7th Avenue. He explained current ordinance provides the issuance of building permits require a plat of the property. There is a possibility of new businesses being located east of 1st Avenue, adjacent to Columbia Street, north of Hwy. 26. He asked the Council what they want to plan for this area; is it to be for truck businesses or for retail, travelers trade which would prohibit trucks on the street. It is now zoned to allow truck traffic, if it were re-zoned for retail trade, it would create the need to design Columbia Street differently, to allow for low speed vehicles and be more pedestrian friendly.

He suggested that the platting of the Columbia Street area be enlarged to the area north and be coordinated with all property owners of the area. This would alleviate the individual parcels platting, as building permits are issued. This is a different endeavor, for the fact the city has never considered being included in platting someone else's property.

He did note that Cenex, located on 1st Avenue has plans for a truck fueling area. He then proposed a realignment of Columbia Street as it approached 1st Avenue. This would align Columbia Street access off of 1st Avenue to the east and west. This would also encroach upon land currently owned by Cenex. Cenex has asked that the city actually show them how the road would impact their property. He did explain that the State has encouraged the city to have a traffic control light at Columbia Street and 1st Avenue to help with the 1st Avenue and Hwy. 26 congestion. This would only be possible if Columbia Street was realigned going up to 1st Avenue.

Mr Andrews reported that storm water is also a problem in this area. Storm water flows south from the Bonnell's Addition and east from south 7th Avenue area and collects in Columbia Street. He proposed negotiations with potential developers in the area for an underground storm water collection system which would travel east to a proposed borrow pit area. Currently, the city requires developers to provide a storm water system.

Council's consensus on these items were:

- have the Planning Commission start the rezoning process of the Columbia Street corridor from trucking industry trade to a retail, travelers area.
- continue discussions with Cenex about the realignment of Columbia Street and come back with costs for obtaining that property.
- to further investigate the coordination effort for the preliminary planning process of this area with all landowners. This would postpone the platting process to a later date. It would also include changing the ordinance provision for platting as a requirement for issuance of building permits. The Council requested budget figures for this project.

STORM WATER CONTAINMENT

Mr Andrews explained the city had received grant funding of \$200,000.00 to re-distribute and contain the city storm water. The city has had discussions with the Port District and WSDOT about use of an existing borrow pit, which is north of Hwy. 26 and west of the railroad tracks for a collection site for all of the city's storm water. This is now owned by the Port District. A concern is how to reclaim the borrow pit to make it look attractive.

He stated we could use the grant funding to lay storm water piping from Main Street to the south, as the first stage of this project. Then, continue to discuss with WSDOT the possibility of them using the fill from the borrow pit area and the ditch traveling north for the Hwy. 26 and 17 overpass project. WSDOT has a landscape architect who will review the borrow pit area for aesthetics.

Council directed staff to pursue the underground storm water collection idea, including continued discussions with the Port District and WSDOT for collection in the borrow pit, located on Port property.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr Andrews reported that the City Hall/Police Department mediation meeting focused mainly on the HVAC system. The mediator agreed with a major portion of our statements. Most of the concerns will be fixed and tested. If it still does not work properly, it may end up being a design problem and we will then start dealing with the architect. Future meetings will deal with other issues.

Mr Shaw reported the Well #7 pumphouse project seems to be completed, with a recommendation to accept the project coming to the council soon. He explained that Morris Construction had repaired the float in the new reservoir. He has asked our engineers to research the deflection area of the reservoir to see if any life expectancy has been lost or fatigue of the steel was created due to the float problem. He suggested that if there has been no great loss of longevity of the steel area, that the city discuss with Morris repair of the aesthetics of the reservoir.

Mr Shaw reported that McCain Foods is using their own well again, which slightly reduces the city's water use.

Mr Shaw has developed a Public Works Director job description and will advertise later this week. Council set a salary for the position at \$42,000 - \$48,000, D.O.Q.

NEW BUSINESS

City Clerk, Debbie Kudrna reported that a local Beta group has made sandhill crane silhouettes, to be sold during the sandhill crane festival which would raise funds for the senior scholarships.

They have asked to "land" the cranes on the City Hall front lawn prior to the festival to help advertise it. It was noted the City would not be responsible for the silhouettes.

Mr Clemons read into the record his concern of the problem of not addressing our water and sewer needs that would enable the city to deliver these services to new businesses. He further stated that our water supply is such that should a pump go down for a period of time, the possibility would be to cause our industries to reduce their consumption. This kind of news would discourage future businesses from coming to Othello. Three years ago, Pete Taggares had offered 1 acre of property, north of town, on which we could drill a well and construct a standpipe. Mr Clemons had checked with the Taggares Company and was assured that an acre of land could still be obtained for a well and standpipe. He then discussed CERB grant and loan funding. He requested the Mayor and Administrator prepare a general plan for Council consideration at the next council meeting. He stated to not consider Gray & Osborne as the engineer for this project, and if they were selected to work the project, he would campaign against it. He offered his assistance to bring the project to discussion.

Councilmember Garza stated that during the retreat it was reported the State requires a water conservation program prior to permitting another water project. Councilmember Derifield stated at the last GWMA meeting, it was reported that prior to permitting any new wells, a conservation plan had to be in place. He reported there are 6,000 well applications at DOE, with a maximum of 80 being worked on by DOE annually.

Curt Andrews reported the DOE has a "first in - first out" process. For two years, the City has an application at DOE to consolidate all of our water rights. If the consolidation was approved, it would help us with the Well #6 dedication for industrial use. We currently have permits to drill another two wells. Currently, grant research is being done, but they all include the need for conservation plans. He explained that Well #5 was rehabilitated twenty years ago with a State grant, in order to implement getting Well #6 off-line for domestic use. Unfortunately, we're still pumping Well #6 on a stand-by basis. Research has been done on dedicating Well #6 for industrial use. A concern is there is no ceiling on water use by the industries, and at this time, they could continue to increase their water consumption. Both Mr Andrews and Mr Shaw recommended a workshop to discuss the water and sewer issues.

Councilmember Ochoa reported on her participation at the A.W.C. legislative conference.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further issues to discuss, Mayor Kelley adjourned the workshop at 9:30 p.m.

Debbie L Kudrna, CMC
City Clerk