

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Shawn Logan called the workshop to order at 6:30 p.m. and led an invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mayor Shawn Logan; Councilmembers: Corey Everett, Genna Dorow, Angel Garza, John Lallas, and Mark Snyder.

Also Present: City Administrator Wade Farris; Department Heads: Public Works Director Terry Clements, Finance Officer Spencer Williams, Community Development Director Travis Goddard, Assistant Police Chief David Rehaume, and City Clerk Debbie Kudrna.

Absent Was: Councilmembers Eugene Bain and Larry McCourtie.

Council carried a motion to approve the absence of Councilmember Eugene Bain and Larry McCourtie. M/S Garza/Dorow.

CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – ABDIEL GOMEZ - 10 YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT

Mayor Logan presented a plaque of appreciation to Dispatcher Abdiel Gomez for 10 years of employment with the City of Othello. Assistant Police Chief David Rehaume gave some background information on Dispatcher Abe Gomez.

WATER REPORTS

City Engineer Jesse Cowger gave a presentation on water supply strategies for use of groundwater, treated industrial waste water, treated surface water and use of an Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR). He reviewed the City's groundwater rights; projections of water usage increases and their next path forward on the technical analysis of feasibility of implementing industrial treatment and reuse; getting buy-in from stakeholders and regulators and acquire funding.

Tim Flynn from Aspect Consulting gave a presentation of the groundwater supply evaluation and ASR feasibility study. He reviewed the capacity of the City's wells; ongoing water level declines in the City's wells, and plans to bring new groundwater source capacity online. Due to the loss of well production and evaluation of our water supply improvement options, he made the following recommendations: rehabilitate Well #7; install a new well tapped into the Wanapum Basalt aquifer, and explore drilling into the Grande Ronde Basalt aquifer. There was a discussion of the operations of the various City well; potential locations of new wells and estimated costs and productions. Mr. Flynn then presented water supply options to support growth, which included developing additional groundwater sources; surface water sources; reclaimed water from industrial users, and development of an ASR program. It was noted that there is an abundance of water in the Saddle Mountain basalt and if we could obtain rights to the water, we might be able to use it in an ASR system.

Andrew Austreng from Aspect Consulting reviewed the scope of work involved in the grant funding from the Department of Ecology. Aspect will collect hydrogeological data; review the legal framework and preparation of a treatment assessment and feasibility report. They will also prepare a conceptual operation and pilot test plan; prepare infrastructure retrofits and pilot testing. Mr. Flynn noted there is a possibility of grant funding for the ASR pilot testing.

City Administrator Wade Farris advised that the timeline for the ASR project may take several years to complete. Staff will be discussing future rates and future infrastructure improvements. Our plans will include support from the regulatory and funding agencies and Council support.

WATER CONNECTION LIMITATIONS

Community Development Director Travis Goddard stated that Andy Cervantes from the State Department of Health (DOH) indicates that the City water system has current capacity for 3,142 water connections and we already have 2,926 approved connections and have a remaining capacity of 216 connections. Calculating in the projects that have been approved but have not actually connected to the City water system yet, would leave us with 121 connections available. There are also a number of new projects that have been discussed with staff and represent an increase in potential water connections. These would put the city at risk of not having enough approved connections for new requests. He advised that the City is at the point where we need to expand our water system again. If we were able to implement use of irrigation water, it would alleviate many required water connections. There was a discussion about use of M & I water. Mr. Goddard advised that our code provides that anyone that develops and has current M & I water rights have to turn those over to the City when they connect to the city's water system. Mr. Farris noted that we should be enforcing the use of irrigation water if it's already in our standards or create these standards if it is not clear.

Mr. Cowger explained that the number of connections determined by DOH does not equal the amount of water available in a system and is an analysis of the city's supply, storage, distribution, and components that DOH uses to monitor water systems. He noted they can review the information that DOH used for this calculation, which may cause it to change.

LATECOMER AGREEMENT EXPLANATION

Community Development Director Travis Goddard explained that there are two types of water connection fees:

Site Facility Charge – (SFC) is to cover the cost associated with the labor, equipment, material, and restoration costs for the connection.

General Facility Charge – (GFC) Charge is assessed to developers as a means to “buy into” or have the right to access the existing utility system.

There are different titles for sewer permits and connections. The Planning Commission will review the water and sewer connection fee titles to determine whether the sewer permit fees can be renamed to SFC and GFC. There was further discussion about the SFC and GFC utility charges and monthly water utility rates.

Mr. Goddard explained that latecomers agreements are related to the construction costs for building and installing new infrastructure, which is usually driven by new development. In such cases, the cost for expansion is a developer's responsibility and they pay their fair share for the new pipe because they may be the only ones who need the pipe. Latecomers agreements are tools for developments that need more infrastructure than usual, such as the property between the development and the existing utility system.

OMC 12.16.285 is the language implementing RCW 35.91 and provides that the person installing the infrastructure is entitled to reimbursement by property owners who are going to connect to that pipe at a future time. By code, the developer needs to petition the City Council for a reimbursement agreement. The City Council's responsibility is to ensure that the reimbursement costs requested are lawful and apportioned in a fair and proper manner.

Councilmember Lallas gave an example of an existing customer who may have numerous water connections and then they request a new water connection. He asked why they will be charged connections fees for the new water meter. Mr. Goddard explained that when a request is received for new connections, they will be assessed a site facility and general facility charge and will pay for the extra capacity for a new connection. He noted that developers have the option to have the City perform the connection or have a contractor perform the connection. He also noted that the City could implement a total cost recovery fee schedule.

Mayor Logan noted that the Council has to set policies for these issues and fees are set to meet future water demands. Councilmember Lallas asked that staff evaluate specific occurrences. Public Works Superintendent Terry Clements advised that the City will have to perform the water connection if the water line is already charged. He noted that the site facility charge should be re-evaluated because the actual cost to perform a water connection is more than what we are currently charging. Mr. Farris advised that citizens have the option to hire their own contractor and the charge is less than if the City performed the connection. Then, the site facility charge is for only installing the water meter. Mr. Clements advised that the City of Moses Lake does not perform any water connections and developers are charged for the meter fee, general facility charge and a right-of-way permit.

Mayor Logan suggested that these issues be discussed with the council committee and noted that the Planning Commission will also discuss certain issues. He advised that we are hosting a meeting on July 28th with elected State officials, state agencies and our consultants to discuss the city's water issues and discuss support from funding agencies.

Mayor Logan reported that the Transportation Benefit District will have a meeting on Monday, August 1, 2016 at 6:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to discuss, Mayor Logan adjourned the workshop at 8:52 p.m.

By: _____
SHAWN LOGAN, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: _____
DEBBIE L. KUDRNA, City Clerk