

City of Othello
City Council Workshop
December 7, 2009

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Shannon McKay called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Shannon McKay; Councilmembers: Eleanor Brodahl, Kenneth Caylor, Kenneth Johnson, Mark Snyder, Marc Spohr, and Tim Wilson.

Also Present: City Administrator Ehman Sheldon and Department Heads: Finance Officer Mike Bailey, Police Chief Steve Dunnagan, City Clerk Debbie Kudrna, City Planner Darryl Piercy, and Municipal Services Coordinator Jay Van Ness

Absent Was: Councilmember Dan Dever.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITIONS:

Mayor McKay presented certificates of appreciation and Othello lapel pins to the following volunteers:

- William Coats
- Othello Planning Commission members: Rex Robbins; Claire Lackie; Nathan Beus; Larry McCourtie and Robert Russell (absent).

D. O. T. PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING SR 24 OVERPASS PROJECT

Bob Romine, project engineer of the Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) advised that the first day of Stage 1 of the SR 24 overpass project is February 22, 2010. This includes lowering the grade under the SR 26 overpass. This portion of the project is expected to be complete in 14 days. Stage 1 has been awarded to a contractor. There will be some radius work at the intersection of Wahluke and S. Broadway Avenue. Stage 2 will include constructing safety components at SR 26 and 1st Avenue. This will include eliminating left hand turns from 1st Avenue onto SR 26. They will provide a left turn lane for traveling east on SR 26 turning onto 1st Avenue. DOT will keep a record of any accidents that occur due to the left turn lane on SR 26 onto 1st Avenue. Mr. Romine explained that there is signage available for local businesses within the area that will be located in the State right-of-way. Stage 2 design and acquisition will begin in the spring. Stage 2 will include improvements to the radius approach on the SR 24 spur. The City has received funding for the project. He explained that there will be information released to the public prior to commencement of Stage 1. During Stage 1, they will re-route traffic to Bench Road east to Reynolds Road. It was noted that DOT is aware of the ground water issue and have plans to accommodate it. There was a discussion regarding emergency services access and a plan will be agreed upon. There will be an ADA walk path available under the bridge open during Stage 1. Municipal Services Coordinator Mr. Van Ness advised that the City will evaluate at the condition of Wahluke Street. Mr. Romine advised that the project is approximately \$1 million.

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE UPDATE

Councilmember Ken Caylor recognized the Centennial committee, which began meeting monthly in 2008. He thanked the Council and City staff for their support and assistance. He explained some of the projects that they are working on include: the centennial brick sidewalk project; centennial flags will be flown; donation of the oil painting by Michael Lewis, which has been used in the advertising; posters; street banners; 2010 calendars; caps; t-shirts; lapel pins; collector coins; and bird houses. Mr. Caylor stated that the Centennial Committee will award two scholarships to graduating seniors. He reviewed the tentative schedule for the two-day centennial event including entertainment; vendors; parade; flag raising; museum program; children activities; street dance; food; community church service; scholarship awards; historical programs; and re-incorporation ceremony. Mayor McKay thanked everyone for their work.

PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING 2010 AS OTHELLO'S CENTENNIAL

Mayor McKay read the proclamation into the record.

CITY OWNED PROPERTY – 9TH AND PINE STREET

Mayor McKay explained that the City property is located adjacent to Lions Park. The City acquired it from the U S Government (Fish and Wildlife). City Administrator Ehman Sheldon stated the City

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accepted the donation of the property in 2000 from the U S Government. Previous to the Quit Claim Deed of the property to the City, it was discovered that the Fish and Wildlife could not directly donate the property to the Othello Housing Authority. He explained that the U S Government contacted the City and asked if the City would accept the donation. At that time, there were discussions whether the City is obligated to pass the property to the Housing Authority. The City has accepted the property and can use it for any of the conditions within the Deed. Those conditions include using it for public housing or any other public use. If the City does not meet those requirements, it will revert back to the U S Government. The City Attorney has advised that the Council has full discretion regarding what they want to do with the property. The City could sell it to another organization at fair market value, as long as that entity complies with the deed restrictions. Mr. Sheldon advised that there are 205 non-taxable lots within the city. This property will always remain as non-taxable property based upon the deed restrictions. Councilmember Johnson reiterated the history of the project, which was started by the U S Fish & Wildlife and the Housing Authority. Because the Housing Authority could not accept the property directly, they came to the City and the property was deeded to the City with the intention that it would be passed through to the Housing Authority. Mr. Hanks requested the property a year later, and it was tabled by the Council. Councilmember Johnson stated that he believes that the City was asked to be the third party as a way to get the property to the Housing Authority and believes it needs to go to who it was originally intended for. Mayor McKay stated that the Housing Authority advised that they wanted to develop senior housing on this property. Councilmember Brodahl explained that it was tabled because the City needed additional parking for Lions Park and the property could accommodate parking. Mayor McKay mentioned there may be property available to trade with the Housing Authority, noting that this property works well for additional parking for Lions Park. He asked that staff look into the fair market value of the property. Mr. Sheldon advised staff will meet with Mr. Hanks and will report back to the Council. Councilmember Caylor stated that he has correspondence supporting the transfer of the property through the City to the Housing Authority.

SEWER RATE DISCUSSION

Finance Officer Mike Bailey presented information relevant to a \$2.00 increase to the base sewer rates for 2010; 2011, and 2012. The total projected revenue from the proposed rate increase is approximately \$219,593. He explained that he will transfer approximately \$500,000 at the end of 2010 into the sewer reserve fund, which will give the sewer reserve fund a balance of approximately \$3.250 million. Councilmember Spohr noted that if we do not impose the rate increases, we would have approximately \$1.5 million in potential reserves. Mr. Bailey advised that staff created the sewer rate modified survey, which shows that the average monthly sewer rate is \$31.72 and Othello's monthly rate is \$19.68.

Municipal Services Coordinator Jay Van Ness reviewed a list of possible sewer capital projects, including: lagoon lining; Bench Road sewer extension; infiltration and inflow study; new mechanical sewer treatment facility, and the infrastructure upgrades in conjunction with the Main Street reconstruction project. Mr. Sheldon advised that if the Department of Ecology (DOE) mandates upgrades, they may help with funding, if we meet certain criteria. Mr. Van Ness explained that our sewer rates have to cover our operational costs and any upgrades in order to get additional funding. Genna Dorow explained that there are combination mechanical and lagoon systems; it would depend on what DOE requires the entity to have and the quality of effluent they require. Genna Dorow advised that we may have infiltration downward in the winter time, when water tables are low. Mr. Sheldon stated that DOE has issued a temporary NPDES permit, which does not indicate that the City has to change to a mechanical sewer system. He noted that our sewer rates are low, and we have to plan for any future upgrades that the DOE may impose.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SHARE INFORMATION

Councilmember Caylor advised he is meeting with WSDOT to discuss scenic by-ways. Councilmember Wilson advised he attended the Auditor's exit conference. They reported that all was excellent. They discussed going to bi-annual audits, and as a whole, but it did not seem there was much of a savings going from an annual to bi-annual audit. We have had 11 years of clean

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audits. Mr. Bailey stated that we have a very conscientious staff to assure that procedures are done correctly. Councilmember Johnson advised there is an ACDC meeting in Othello Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor McKay made the following announcements:

- Shop with a Cop program is Saturday, December 12th.
- 3rd grade students will decorate the tree on Friday at City Hall.
- The Mayor's luncheon is December 9th at the Othello Senior Center.
- The Festival of lights parade is Saturday, December 12th.
- The December 14th meeting will include refreshments to acknowledge the outgoing Councilmember and Mayor and the incoming Mayor and Councilmembers.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to discuss, Mayor McKay adjourned the workshop at 8:45 p.m.

By: _____
SHANNON MCKAY, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: _____
DEBBIE L. KUDRNA, City Clerk