

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON  
7:00 PM AUGUST 14, 2023**

NOTE: Where stated "Motion Carried" is considered unanimous, unless otherwise stated.

**ATTENDEES:**

**Corey Sweeney  
JoAnna Lamb  
John Doherty  
Sharon Inskeep  
Cody High  
Adam Doherty  
Dale Bates  
Tom Wolff  
Chad Doherty  
Steve Rhea  
Bill Kuhn**

**Absent: None**

**Members of the Public: Nathen Braun, Barb Orwick, Rosa Cayce, Kelly Holland, Brandi & Colton Hanson**

**On Zoom: Patti Allstott, Heppner Gazette, Thao Tu, Kraig Cutsforth**

**1. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the August 14, 2023 meeting of the City of Heppner City Council to order at 7:00 PM.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance. Corey Sweeney led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
- C. Announcements - None
- D. Correspondence – Letter from Kraig Cutsforth

Kraig Cutsforth submitted a letter to inform the Council that he is retiring and is giving 30 days notice.

## E. Requests

Vietnamese Community of Oregon: Proclamations Request.

Thao Tu of the Vietnamese Community of Oregon is requesting that the City of Heppner make a proclamation that the city adopts the Vietnamese Freedom Flag as the official flag of Vietnamese Americans in the City of Heppner. The proclamation he is proposing states that there were Vietnamese refugees in Heppner that worked to contribute to the development of our city. Thao Tu provided no documentation that backs up this proclamation. The Council did not make a motion regarding the request.

## F. Presentations

Barb Orwick gave a presentation for the Neighborhood Center. They gave out 71 food boxes in July, which fed 152 people. They received 150 pounds of food donations. Much of it comes from peoples gardens. Their hours are 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. They will be conducting a food drive in the next few weeks, as the deliveries from Capeco are getting smaller.

## 2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Colton & Brandi Hanson asked about the sidewalk in front of their house and why it wasn't replaced during the Gale Street project. Chad said that their sidewalk was never in the plans as there was nowhere to continue it and that was not cost effective. They asked if they were allowed to remove trees and level the area or if the city will do this. Tom and Chad will look into where the city easements are.

## 3. CONSENT AGENDA

### A. July 10, 2023 City Council meeting minutes.

A clarification and a name correction were requested in the minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes with changes by Sharon Inskeep. Seconded by John Doherty. Motion Carried

### B. Approval of Monthly Bills

The computer server has been paid for.

The installation of the cameras has been paid for and they will be installed during the last week of August.

The cost of chlorine has gone from \$300 per tank to almost \$1,000.

The cleanup costs at Blake's Ranch were funded by a grant.

Motion to approve the monthly bills by Adam Doherty. Seconded by Dale Bates.  
Motion Carried

C. Financial Statement – For information only

#### 4. REPORTS

A. Fire Chief Report

- 10 Lift assists
- 8 Secure landing zone
- 1 Natural vegetation fire mutual aid to North Gilliam Co
- 1 Natural vegetation fire mutual aid to lone
- 1 Motor vehicle accident with injuries, life flighted
- 2 Natural vegetation fire mutual aid to South Gilliam Co
- 2 Natural vegetation fires in Rural
- 1 SAR for Hermiston Rural Fire Protection District
- 1 Motor vehicle accident non Injury
- 1 Downed utility line in the city
- 1 Natural vegetation fire mutual aid to Umatilla Co
- 1 Smoke check Rural
- 1 Smoke detector activation in the city
- 1 Citizen assist in the city
- 41 Chief calls

133 calls to date. Awaiting Ready to Build with options of a Type 3 engine for RFPD. Conducting burns around the city. Four firefighters completed NFPA Firefighter 1. Awaiting Certification.

Steve asked the Council to consider charging the Health District for the Fire Dept. to do lift assists. They are assisting them more than ever because EMS is short staffed. Sometimes they go as far as Blake's Ranch or Cutsforth Park to assist. As with the securing the landing zone it takes resources that the Fire Department is not getting reimbursement for.

B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department

Nathen Braun read the report. There were 353.50 hours for the month of July. Martin and Stutzman were the main patrol deputies. A few other officers backfilled some of the hours when they were absent. Cody asked if we could get a breakdown of the hours and what they were doing, patrol or investigative etc. Cody asked about the mastiff dogs that have been aggressive. There were several calls regarding this and a Senior Citizen at Assisted Living was bitten. What was the follow up on this?

There is a growing feral cat problem in the city. The Sheriff's Office has hauled 12 cats trapped by an individual to pet rescue from the May Street area. Patrol time is used to transport them and the city is billed by Pet Rescue for receiving them. There are reports of cats being fed near the hospital and on Elder Street, with at least 30 cats at each location. The neighbors are complaining about them spraying on their personal property, vehicles, porches, etc. There is not a feral cat Ordinance and there are none in Oregon. It is a difficult thing to enforce. The council discussed the possibility of creating an Ordinance banning feeding stations for feral cats. Citizens who are trapping feral cats can haul them to Pet Rescue and pay the fees themselves. Cody suggested that the city consider a trap spay/neuter and release program. The Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon (FCCO) has a spay and neuter program. Tom will put together a sheet with a list of organizations that accept trapped feral cats.

Motion for the city to no longer devote resources for the removal or transport of feral cats including Morrow County Sheriff's Office and Public Works by John Doherty. Seconded by JoAnna Lamb. Cody High, Adam Doherty and Sharon Inskeep voted opposed. Motion Carried

C. Public Works. Chad Doherty read the Public Works report.

Water Dept. – Replaced water meters at 146 N Main. And 162 N Main St, and replaced meter boxes at these locations. Continued to monitor and adjust the wells physically. Changed the pump head on the c12 pump at Reservoir 1. Replaced 2" water meter at Community Counseling Solutions. Replaced 2 water meters at Wilkinson Ranch homes. Replaced all irrigation boxes and water meter box in front of Murrays. Lowered water meter at 217 N Main St.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins twice. Did 11 Septic dumps. Bainbridge and Associates calibrated the influent and effluent meters. Continued to train Alea on the treatment plant duties. Took fecal and sludge profile samples so we can begin hauling biosolids.

Streets Dept. – Raised irrigation in front of the Senior Center. Removed the fence and dead trees at 290 NE Chase St. Attended weekly ODOT ramp project meetings. Pulled puncture vine on Morgan St. by the guardrail. Moved the irrigation box in the bubble out by Bucknum's. Hauled off one deer to the ODOT yard.

Parks Dept. – Fixed the mulching deck for the Walker mower. Fixed the irrigation at Memorial Park. Dug up and raised all 4" sprinklers at Plaza Park. Attended the Beautification meeting. Had Inland Turf replace the blower on the 2009 Walker Mower. Fixed multiple leaky irrigation valves at Hager Park.

Other. – Put a tarp on the dump trailer. Changed oil in 2 service pickups.

Steve Rhea asked about the fire hydrant at Willow and Main that was ran over by the construction crew. Chad has the part to repair it, but he is waiting for them to raise it as they raised the concrete up around it. Steve said that the Fire Hall parking lot needs to be crack sealed before winter hits. Corey said that it needs to be contracted, as the County will not do it. Corey will send Tom a list of vendors that do crack sealing.

#### D. City Manager Report

Tom Wolff's report was included in the Council packet. He asked if there were any questions regarding the report.

The Small Cities Allotment was re-submitted and accepted.

What are the plans for the Chase Street property? Will it be sold? WCVEDG may be interested in it to construct Senior Housing. The Council discussed the possibility of putting the property up for bid.

The fence is going in between 290 and 270 N Chase. The City is not putting in that fence. A neighbor and another neighbor are cost sharing the fence. The City just happens to be one of the neighbors. WCVEDG has allowed an extension on the City grant for the demolition to include the city's portion of the fence.

## 5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Ordinance 589-23, An Ordinance Amending the City of Heppner Municipal Code, Creating a Policy for Camping Activities on City-Owned Public Property for Those Experiencing Homelessness.

1. Open Public Hearing at 8:07

No Public Comment

2. Close Public Hearing at 8:08

3. Council Comments and Discussion

Tom Wolff commented that this is the second reading of the Ordinance as required by state law. Tom recommends that the Ordinance be adopted.

4. Council Acton

Motion to approve Ordinance 589-23, An Ordinance Amending the City of Heppner Municipal Code, Creating a Policy for Camping Activities on City-Owned Public Property for Those Experiencing Homelessness by Adam Doherty. Seconded by John Doherty. Motion Carried

## 6. BUSINESS

## A. Old Business

1. Sewer Project Update – Anderson Perry is waiting for DEQ approval on the feasibility study. After the approval, they will work on seeking funding. Construction could start in late 2024.
2. Water System Update – Tom Wolff met with Kim Cutsforth and Mellissa Lindsay who attended the Economic Summit in LaGrande where they met with Senator Bill Hansel. They discussed Heppner's need for a redundant water supply source. He will be coming to Heppner in the next two weeks to review the proposed project. This will also provide pressure to that side of town and act as an alternate source in case of an emergency. Bill Hansel will work to find funding for the project. With that water system in place, it would open up the proposed subdivision to allow WCVEDG to sell their lots on the hill.
3. Street Project Update – Public Works was able to get the improperly installed crosswalk removed. That should clear the last hurdle in getting the City's \$200,000.00 retainer released from the State of Oregon. Tom will email ODOT tomorrow and ask for the funds.

There are three places on Gale Street where water fails to run to a storm drain and is causing puddles. After the recent rainstorm there was 12'-14' of water out into the center of Willow Street beside Murray's Drug that was about 5" deep. A spot is in front of the Methodist Church and one at the Hinton Creek bridge near the new foot bridge. Chad and Tom are working on coming up with a solution. The city will have to resolve this as the retainage has been paid to Premier and Ferguson Engineering is no longer in business. Tom suggests holding retainage longer for any future projects.

4. Morrow County Sheriff's Office: Sidewalks

Tom responded to the letter from the Sheriff's Office. His response was based on a Utility Commission Meeting that was referred by the Council. The request will be considered in the next round of financing, Small Cities Allotment or street project.

## B. New Business - None

### 7. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS – For information only.

**8. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY** – He has continued work on the Street Vacation. There is a triangular shaped property in the area that was known as Cross Street that has never been used. On the west side the tip of the triangle is in the Hager/Gilmore intersection. The Lauritsens have asked if the street can be vacated and they will give the city the land in the

intersection. You can initiate a vacation by petition of the council or the council can do it on its own. To vacate a property you have to have a public hearing, it has to be published at least twice before the Council Meeting. You have to post on both of the vacation area where it can be seen. You need the permission of the adjoining landowners. There are three property owners involved and signatures of everyone listed on the property is required. It is standard for Cities' to keep utility easements when they vacate streets. It would not be allowed to build structures on the utility easement. The council approved moving forward with the street vacation.

**9. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS** - Corey Sweeney expressed well wishes for Kraig Cutsforth's retirement.

**10. ADJOURNMENT** – Meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM