

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON  
7:00 PM SEPTEMBER 9, 2024**

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

**ATTENDEES:**

**Corey Sweeney  
Ralph Klock  
Sharon Inskeep  
Ian Murray  
Adam Doherty  
Dale Bates  
Cody High  
John Doherty  
Chad Doherty  
Eric Chick  
Nathen Braun  
Bill Kuhn**

**Absent: Steve Rhea**

**Members of the Public: Barb Orwick, Phil Sanfiorenzo, Dan Dunnett, Doug Holland**

**On Zoom: None**

**1. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the September 9, 2024 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 - None
- E. Requests - None

F. Presentations – Barb Orwick gave the Neighborhood Center report. They gave out 84 food boxes which fed 187 people. The fire crews and the community have donated over \$2,000 of food.

## **2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – None**

## **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. August 12, 2024, City Council meeting minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes by Ralph Klock. Seconded by Dale Bates. Motion Carried

B. Approval of Monthly Bills

Motion to approve the monthly bills by Dale Bates. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Motion Carried

C. Financial Statement – For information only.

## **4. REPORTS**

A. Fire Chief Report – Steve Rhea read the report.

4 Lift Assist EMS  
6 Secure Landing Zone  
1 Cancelled enroute motor vehicle accident at North Lex  
1 Natural Vegetation Mutual Aid to North Gilliam County  
1 Motor Vehicle Accident with Injuries  
1 Good Intent Smoke RFPD  
1 Rekindle of Prescribed Fire RFPD  
1 Mutual Aid for lone Hay Fire, cancelled enroute  
1 Mutual Aid for Bombing Range Fire  
1 Cancelled enroute Mutual aid to UCFD  
1 Mutual Aid for lone Structure and Natural Vegetation Fire  
1 Cancelled enroute Mutual Aid Tribal Fire  
1 Body Removal  
2 Smoke in Dollar General from the AC

136 Calls to Date. 42 Chief Calls for the month.

New Tactical Tender delivery expected in September per OSFM. Has now been put out until 2025.

Celebrated 125 Anniversary with a BBQ at the Station.

Received the Chassis VIN for our new Type 3 from Skeeter.

Final inspection with Maintenance on Ladder Truck TBD.

The Tactical Tender has taken so long that they have discussed building one in house next time as they have the resources to do so. It would be faster and less expensive.

- B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department – The total hours for August were 392.80. One felony arrest made from a traffic stop as the individual had a warrant. One citation issued. In October Colton Seelye will be on at night and Steve Larsen will be on days.

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

Water Dept. – The crew replaced water meters at 175 Quaid, 655 Hager, 260 Water, 252 Jones and 185 S Chase St. Checked on a possible water leak from Well 1 to Well 2. Unable to find anything. The Public Works Crew inspected 31 of the lead and copper inventory, 78 of the 109 services, and 31 left, this will be our focus during September. Ordered Starlink for Wells 1, 2 and 3. Chad sent in the disinfected by-product samples to BOX R labs in Prineville. Continued to find the best place to put a 2" standpipe for the Morrow County Weed Department. It was determined that the current location at 213 Linden Way would be costly and require ODOT hoops to jump through. We elected to put a fill station on Riverside Ave. at the City yard. The project is near completion. Worked with Anderson & Perry GIS to resolve some issues with our water system. This was necessary so A & P could run a \*hydraulic model. Updated the master water meter spreadsheet. Set up two hydrant meters for the USFS and the other was for Michel's Construction. The crew repaired a leaking water meter at 190 Rock St. The crew adjusted and monitored the wells visually and by hand. TAG has started installing hardware for the new SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins four times. Did 7 septic dumps. Checked on two possible sewer plugs. Took a DIN, Sludge Profile and Fecal Samples to Prineville. These samples must be processed within 24 hours. The Golf Course effluent irrigation developed a short in the electrical system. With the help of TAG, we found the short in one of the control boxes. The system was down for about five days. Met with Bainbridge & Assoc. to have the yearly influent and effluent meters calibrated.

Streets Dept. – Fertilized the hanging baskets twice. The crew painted the Shamrock. Chad traveled to Walla Walla for a title change for the Street Sweeper. Owen Equipment lost the title. Public Works pulled weeds on Main Street. Set up and took down for the Rodeo Parade. We also set up no parking on Fairview Way for a fire lane. Swept Main Street, May Streets to Morrow County Fairgrounds, and from City Park to Heppner Fire Department. Public Works repaired a pressure switch preventing the dump on the sweeper from operating. Public Works put up the Morrow County Fair & Rodeo banners. Painted a step with caution yellow by Thomson Food Court.

Parks Dept. – The Public Works crew fixed the fences on the trees at Hager and Heritage Parks. Sprayed for broad leaf at Memorial Park. Caleb repaired the concrete in front of the door at the City Park restroom. Set up the soccer goals at Hager Park.

Park District- Fertilized the Fit Park. Continued to mow the Fit Park and the pool area.

Shop/Other Dept.- Caleb changed the oil in the 2014 RAM 1500 #15. Caleb fixed a water leak on the Vactor Truck. The dump trailer was damaged during use. Coil Fab fixed the trailer jack.

\*Hydraulic model – used mathematical formulas and algorithms, along with physical data (elevation, pipe diameter, water level, etc.), to predict how water flows through pipes, pumps, valves and storage tanks, and how it is distributed throughout a community. A well-developed hydraulic model offers a detailed representation of a water distribution system, allowing for improved decision-making regarding pressure management, water storage, and infrastructure investment.

#### D. City Manager Report

1. Met with Nikki, Logan, and Jeff from Pinegate Renewables. Along with Steve Rhea, discussed emergency services @ Sunstone Solar. Discussed development opportunities with Pinegate group.
2. SMSCM – Presented as guest speaker @ August 13th luncheon.
3. Attended GEODC monthly meeting.
4. Attended Heppner Housing Authority monthly meeting.
5. Anderson Perry – Spoke with Dane Maben about Small City Allotment Grant, future work session, and Engineer of Record. Worked with Dane on City response to private landowner and temporary well usage change.
6. Zoning – Addressed unpermitted building addition within Regulated Floodway. Had property representative dismantle structure. Met with property representative on zoning regulations and options.
7. Attended monthly POM meeting. Former Kinzua site was discussed in regard to multi-use building and test digs for DEQ permit for floodplain remediation. Congressional Directed Spending applications discussed.
8. Code enforcement – worked with MCSO on several code compliance issues.
9. City Park – Submitted Amazon ChangeX grant application.
10. WCPD – Attended two meetings to discuss pool end-of-season duties and future training and duties related to pool maintenance.
11. NFIP – Attended webinar regarding upcoming changes to floodplain development and how it relates to City.

12. Public Information Requests – Responded to several requests involving 2024 General Election, ODOT request, Fire Department request, and one prior Heppner Police request.
13. IT – Work with Hermiston IT on changeover, ordered new hardware for City (PCs, laptops, and firewall.)
14. LOC- Completed Legislative Priorities response. Several conversations with Michael Martin, LOC lobbyist, in regards to FEMA/NFIP/ESA regulation changes and LOC work to challenge regulations and timeline.
15. Reviewed City payroll, budget, and bank reconciliations.
16. Gale St pedestrian bridge – work with driver's insurance company and Coil Fabrication on claim and estimate for repair and researched manufacturer for design drawings.
17. Community Rating System – Attended 2-day training on CRS program.
18. Met with MCSO Detective Carter to review camera footage for open case, provided archive footage.
19. Several meetings with Mayor to discuss Circuit Court, POM mill site, code compliance and complaints.
20. HVFD/HRFPD/Morrow County – Met with Matt Jensen, Tommy Wolff, and Steve Rhea to discuss IGA for mutual aid and had Bill Kuhn make slight revisions for IGA to present for Council approval.
21. Met with MC Administrator Matt Jensen to discuss IGA for mutual aid, Linden St shop rental, temporary RV permit, Circuit Court, and Telemetry funds.
22. Completed “Call for Projects” survey for “Northwest Rural Strategy Summit.” Discussed projects with LOC ED Patty Mulvihill and COH future capital projects.
23. Blue Mountain Networks – Discussions with Joel Barfield and Paul Ernst in regards to franchise fees.
24. Kuhn Law – Several meetings with Bill Kuhn regarding TRT, ordinance revision, IGA, and various other items.
25. Morrow County BOC – attended work session where ASA contract with MCHD was signed. Zoom.
26. OTPR – Several meetings and calls with Board members in regards to support for Circuit Court.
27. Public Works job opening – Held candidate interview along with Chad and Caleb.
28. Engineer of Record – Published RFQ with Gazette, Hermiston Plans Center, and Tri-Cities Plans Center. Emailed RFQ to prospective engineering firms. Phone calls with HECO and AP about RFQ.
29. Circuit Court – Solicited letters of support and received letters from OTPR (rescinded,) local OTPR volunteers, local residents, City of Heppner, Heppner Chamber of Commerce, WCVEDG, Bill Kuhn and Annetta Spicer. Submitted letters to Morrow County for inclusion in BOC September 4th meeting agenda packet. Several conversations with Councilors in regards to Circuit Court.
30. ODOT Heppner- Request to Bob Greisen for facilities use for upcoming “Ride The Blues.” Responded to request regarding wastewater and Stormwater connections @ ODOT Heppner properties.

31. 2024 General Election – Received candidate filing paperwork prior to August 27th, 5:00 PM deadline. Filed Certification with Morrow County Clerk/Elections officer for candidates whom filed.
32. Oregon SOS – filed “Plan of Action” from FY22-23 audit and confirmed receipt and process with Dacia Smith @ SOS.
33. Attended WCVEDG meeting.
34. Planning – Met with Kim Coil to complete Zoning Permit and Variance applications for Chase St properties and will schedule October Planning Commission meeting with public hearing.
35. BOC – Attended August 28th Work Session via Zoom –Circuit Court placement and options discussed. Judge Hill lobbied for Boardman location of “satellite court.” BOC voted to pursue looking at sites in Boardman.
36. Economic Development Committee – Attended August meeting.
37. Worked with private landowner on private well usage permit change. Drafted letter in favor of permit change based on recommendations from AP.
38. Small City Allotment Grant, ODOT – Completed grant application for 2024 SCA for Gilmore/Pioneer/Thompson St rebuild project.
39. FY 23-24 audit – Received paperwork for upcoming audit, processed information requests to various service providers. Heather working on documentation requests for Barnett & Moro.
40. TRT- Received delinquent payments for property owner after 8 months of efforts.
41. BOC- Attended September 4th BOC meeting in Heppner. Gave public comment from COH and WCVEDG in support of new Circuit Court build in Heppner. Terri Gentry also gave public comment in support. BOC voted 2-1 to site new building in Boardman (Commissioners Wenholz and Drago in favor, Chair Sykes in opposition.)
42. USACE – Attended informational meeting on September 5th, along with Mayor Sweeney, Asst Fire Chief Chick, Sheriff Bowles, Emergency Manager Freeland, and 12 members of USACE. Reviewed EAP, inundation mapping, flood mapping, history of Heppner dam, threats and opportunities. Toured Heppner dam. Conversation with Paul Scaflani on upcoming floodplain mapping timeline and FEMA/NFIP regulation changes.
43. Dawson Quinton – discussion with Representative Smith's Legislative Director for transportation projects and upcoming Legislative Session.

Morrow County is moving on building the Circuit Courthouse in Boardman. The Council feels that the BOC should address the citizens of Heppner at a public meeting, now that they have voted against the Heppner location. Is there anything we can do to change that? Originally, they were all in support of the building being located in Heppner. What changed? The day before the Mill Site was disqualified, Judge Hill submitted a letter as a last-ditch effort to move it to Boardman. The letter suggested calling the building an “Annex”. Corey and John got letters of support and submitted them to keep it here. The Rodeo Board pulled their letter of support and that didn't help. At the BOC meeting last week they looked at 3 options, the original sites in Heppner and Boardman, or additional sites in Boardman. Chair Sykes said that it

should stay in Heppner. They discussed that if they looked at Boardman they wouldn't look at any additional sites. A suggestion by Commissioner Wenzholz thought they should look at the county owned site in Boardman. They put it to a vote and Wenzholz and Drago voted in favor and Sykes voted against. There was discussion where Drago commented that he didn't promise to keep the Courthouse in Heppner but he wanted it to be in Heppner. Emotionally he wanted it to be in Heppner but logistically with the case load it should probably be in Boardman. Originally the plan was to remodel the second floor of the old courthouse for offices when the new building was built in Heppner. Now there are no plans for a remodel and there will still be some court cases there. At a previous work session Judge Hill stated that they will have a better chance of finding a Judge for Morrow County if it is sited in Boardman. Eighty percent of the cases from the jail are held on zoom so they don't even have to transport inmates. He also said that they haven't been able to fill positions due to the Heppner location. The website currently is not advertising any job openings in the Justice Department. You can't fill a job if you aren't posting it. A lot of what Judge Hill said is hearsay. The City Attorney has done some work on finding out if it is ok to build outside of Heppner, and there is a state statute that says Circuit Court is supposed to be held in Heppner. He doesn't have the resources to investigate it further. A firm in Eugene is now working on this. Bill will report to the council when the research is done. Having it here is hopefully still viable. The Council would like John to contact the BOC to invite them to a public workshop to discuss their decision.

## **5. BUSINESS**

### **A. Old Business**

#### **1. City Park Remodel**

John has turned in several grant applications. The approval meeting for the big grant request from Oregon Parks and Rec meeting is on September 18<sup>th</sup>. We are on the list for recommended funding for that, which should hopefully add \$1000,000 to the project.

#### **2. Anderson Perry – Update**

They are still on schedule for the end of 2024. There will be a workshop before the October 14 Council Meeting at 6:00 PM.

#### **3. Engineer of Record – Update**

This has been published with a 12-week timeline. September 28 is the closing date for requests for additional information. Early October is the deadline for turning in proposals. There are two firms that have shown interest.

4. Public Works job opening

Will pull the advertising as we haven't had any luck attracting candidates with experience. The position will remain open and we will still accept applications. It is easier to hire people with no experience in the spring as they have all summer to get trained in mowing etc. Training an unexperienced employee is more difficult going into fall and winter.

5. Chase Street Property - Update

The zoning and variance paperwork has been completed. There will be a Planning Meeting on October 7.

**B. New Business**

1. Intergovernmental Agreement Between Morrow County and The City of Heppner and The Heppner Rural Fire Protection District for Emergency Response.

Motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement Between Morrow County and The City of Heppner and The Heppner Rural Fire Protection District for Emergency Response by Cody High. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Motion Carried

**6. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS** – For information only.

**7. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY** – Most of what he worked on was discussed during the City Managers Report. Other than that, he drafted the IGA with Morrow County.

**8. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS** – Will try to have a Beautification meeting on October 10 at 8 AM. Corey will be out of town for the October Council meeting.

**9. ADJOURNMENT** – Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.