**CITY OF JOHN DAY**

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES NOVEMBER 26, 2024**

**COUCILORS PRESENT:**

**COUNCILORS ABSENT**

Sherrie Rininger, Mayor

Chris Labhart, Councilor

Eric Bush, Council President

Ron Phillips, Councilor

Bradley Hale, Councilor

David Holland, Councilor (Excused)

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Melissa Bethel, City Manager

Nick Ducote, Contract Grant writer & administrator

**Agenda Item No. 1—Call Meeting to Order**

The City Council meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

**Agenda Item No. 2—Pledge of Allegiance**

The City Council stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Agenda Item No. 3—Roll Call and Attendance**

Mayor Rininger stated all Councilors were present besides Councilor Holland who is excused.

**Agenda Item No. 4—Amend or Accept Regular Agenda**

***Councilor Phillips moved to accept the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hale and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 5—Public Comments**

Matt Turner: Mr. Turner is the Canyon City Fire Chief. He suggested the new Fire Hall be named after the former Fire Chief of John Day, Ron Smith as a dedication to all of his hard work.

**Agenda Item No. 6—Consent Agenda**

Items on the consent agenda for approval:

1. Minutes of 11-12-24
2. Accounts Payable through November 19, 2024

***Councilor Bush moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bush and passed unanimously.***

**Agenda Item No. 7—Rate study analysis and recommendation—Donovan Enterprises, Inc**

Steve Donovan provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the utilities rates forecast. Donovan presented the 5-year funding plan, existing water rate structure and his recommended adjustments. For non-domestic water the City has a rate of $0.001 per gallon, he recommends the City charges the full cost of service. On water he recommends a 4% annual general rate increase.

For the Wastewater he talked about key planning assumptions, funding strategies for the new WWTP, annual changes in Wastewater revenue requirements and the 5-year single family rate forecast. The gross project cost is $33.5 million. Grant contributions is $5.9 million. The total estimated annual level debt service is $1,153,962 per year when the project is complete. For sewer rates he suggests a level rate increase over time. This is a substantial rate increase and a substantial project.

People from Canyon City are frustrated about this project and asked if their Council could have a work session with John Day Council.

Louis Provencher: He stated when the Community Development fee was adopted by Council the public was told that the rate would not go up.

**Agenda Item No. 8—Ducote Consulting; fiscal analysis of projects**

Jim Peck with Flagline discussed what has changed with the cost estimates and what they’re doing about it. Labor and material prices have gone up since the beginning of this project. Concrete has also gone up by almost three times the amount it originally was. Mechanical and electrical equipment has gone up 55-60 percent in the last two years.

Ducote is aware there have been concerns within the community regarding where all of the money went that the City had for the Sewer Plant. He presented a visual slide show that showed how the money from the various grants was spent and who it went to.

Councilor Labhart asked when the rates would go up. Bethel stated Council will have a Resolution at the December meeting with the new fee schedule. It will go into effect in January.

**Agenda Item No. 9—City Manager Comments**

Bethel asked Council if they would be willing to move the December meeting to the 17th because of the Holidays. Council came to a consensus to do so.

Bethel asked Council if they would allow her to work on a letter of support for Parks and Rec for a grant and have the Mayor sign it. Councilor Hale stated he would like a little more information on what the grant is for.

Every year League of Oregon Cities has all of the elected officials and staff go to Salem to meet with their Representatives and Legislatures. This will be January 28th, 2025.

**Agenda Item No. 10—Mayor and Council Comments**

Councilor Bush stated that the number one priority for the City is the Wastewater Treatment Plant and believes they need to really focus on getting this done.

Councilor Labhart asked where the City stands with the audit. Bethel stated the auditors came and we are still waiting on the report. He asked when they will be doing an evaluation on the City Manager, Mayor Rininger stated they are in the process of getting that put together. Councilor Labhart also asked for an update on the Union negotiations. Bethel stated they are still ongoing because the contract was turned down so they will go back to negotiations.

**Adjourn:**

There being no further business before council the meeting was adjourned.

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Melissa Bethel, CM