

**Town of Garfield
TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Preliminary Draft
Town Hall – March 8, 2017**

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Ray McCown called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Ray McCown, David Jones, Dave Ulrick, Neal Leon, Daymon Marple and Mark Young. Staff: Clerk/Treasurer Cody Lord and Public Works Mark Phillips Absent:

GUESTS:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: David Jones **MOVED** to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting February 22, 2017. Neal Leon seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Chief Jerry Neumann present for this meeting.

Chief Neumann said all has been quiet the last couple weeks with the exception of the same household issues. Mayor McCown said he would like to complain about the white suburban on 2nd Street with a flat tire on it. It was parked all winter in the way of the snow plow. Chief Neumann said they will make contact with the owner and at the very least have them put air in their tire. Neal Leon asked if the town had an ordinance against parking vehicles on the street for any length of time. Mayor McCown believes they should have something in writing that says they have to move vehicles every 24 hours so they can more easily plow in the winter months. Chief Neumann said in Palouse they have certain hours when you can't park on the streets, or they will have parking on one side of the street even days and then the other side on odd days. Daymon Marple said if they move from California to 2nd Street as their side street it becomes another problem because this is the main route for the school buses and it becomes very congested.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Mark Phillips is present for the Public Works Department

Water

- Everything is fine in the water department with the exception of the telemetry system acting up. Joe Keller is still out recuperating so they may need to source a different electrician that can look at the telemetry system.

Sewer

- Mark opened some of the manholes on 4th street to survey the infiltration while the water table is up. There are lots of holes letting in lots of water at the manholes. These I&I issues will be a little more difficult to remedy because they are right on the highway and will require lane closures to make the repairs. The manholes will need to be cleaned and then sealed. Neal said if you are on the highway you will need to set up signage and possibly have a flagger to shut down a lane of traffic. They will also need to purchase safety equipment for the project and because of all of these additional expenses they should probably see what the cost is to source it out. Mayor McCown asked Neal if he knew potential companies that do this kind of work and Neal said maybe ML Albright or Roach Construction. Mark said he has some pictures if anyone was interested in seeing them.
- Mary Young asked where the town is at in the application process with DOE and Mark Phillips replied the application has been submitted and now they just wait for DOE to approve it.

Garbage

- Everything is going good in the garbage department.

Streets

- Street sweeping will start to take place before too long.

Park

- There is a lot of standing water right now which is uniform with years past.

Reuel is trying to get DOE to change the requirement for the chlorine sampling to change to the end of the pond and also removing the weekend sampling so they don't have to have weekend hours. The renewal of the application will be good for 5 years. Neal asked if they ever got the other pumps working at the plant and Mark said Reuel was working on the check valve yesterday but didn't get it quite done. Mayor McCown said once the check valve is done they can then put the pump back down there. Mark said the pump they have is not a spare it actually has a spot and Dave Ulrick questioned do they have a backup pump still. There are 2 pumps working, one is being worked on and there is one bad check valve which takes the load off the screens and takes it to the aeration cell. Dave said he thought the influent valves were changed a couple years ago. Mayor McCown said the one that is stuck right now is in the headworks and that is why with the massive amounts of fluid entering the plant they are not able to keep up with it.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Surplus Gator, Orange Dump Truck and Cop Car

Mayor McCown asked the council if they would like to surplus the gator, dump truck and cop car. Neal said he is not in favor of surplus the gator because it is a handy utility vehicle. Mayor McCown said he thinks a 4 wheeled system would be better than a 6 wheeled system like the town currently has. Daymon asked if they could just take the second set of wheels off and Dave said that was purchased specifically for the 6 wheeled system to help distribute the weight better and allow from a spray tank to be placed in the bed. Mayor McCown said that Robby and Brad attempted a few times to use it for meter reads but were unsuccessful in making it run well enough to use it. Mark worked on it a couple days and it is still not running all that well. David Jones asked when the last time it ran well and Mark said it hasn't run well since he has been with the town. Dave said he has seen it used maybe 2 or 3 times a year and he doesn't really see a use for keeping it. Daymon Marple **MOVED** to surplus the gator, orange dump truck and the cop car. David Jones seconded the motion and the motion carried with Neal Leon and Mark Young as Nah votes. Mark Phillips will look into the values of each vehicle in their current condition to find out the minimum bid needed to surplus the item.

2. Employee Handbook Revisions

Dave Ulrick said the main thing he has an issue with is the floating holidays, stating if it is a holiday in the manual then it should be a mandatory holiday. He suggests taking out the discretionary part of the holiday and make the employees take it noting that often times if the public works decides not to take the holiday it then messes up the garbage route for people assuming the garbage will resume the day after the holiday and might get missed on Mondays. Mark Phillips said this has been easily solved by always picking up garbage on a Tuesday after an observed holiday regardless if the public works department elects to take the Monday holiday off.

Mayor McCown asked are there any other changes in there other than what was highlighted. David asked about the performance evaluations and whether they were being conducted. Mark Young said in this day and age not conducting a performance evaluation doesn't fly with him, and in order to be compliant with current law, they need to have performance evaluations done so there is no ambiguity. It also makes sure all the steps have been followed if they would ever need to terminate someone and not open themselves up for litigation and on the flip side it is a good tool to praise someone and let them know how they are doing. David said he agreed and the evaluations don't need to be a complicated matter. Mark reminds the council the last couple years they saw what could happen if the town doesn't document evaluations and he really encourages the town to come into compliance on this matter. David asked if the town currently had a template of an employee performance evaluation and Cody responded yes the town has an easy form to follow. David asked if they could get a copy to review in the future.

David said another highlighted area of the handbook reads that an employee must reside in or nearby Garfield to be employed for the Town of Garfield and wonders if the town still needs this in the handbook. Dave said the problem is if a guy lives in Tekoa and the roads are bad in the winter then the town has no

one to plow our streets. Daymon said Mark lives close to town so he has that covered. Mayor McCown said with Reuel they had to make an exception so they could accommodate the Level II operator requirements. Dave said the other change would be making full time at 32 hours and above so that Cody doesn't lose out on the ability to get benefits in case he falls below the 40 hour threshold. Cody explained he works from home with Mayor McCown's permission 8 hours a week so that he can use the quiet time without distractions from people entering the office. There are certain functions that take concentration and are nearly impossible to complete without distractions and he has no one to relieve him to focus on these responsibilities.

Cody also said while reading the employee handbook, he discovered that at the 3 year employment anniversary an employee is then eligible for 5 hours of accrued vacation per paycheck. He assumed this meant 5 hours sick leave as well but after further examination it appears the sick leave remains at 4 hours per paycheck. He has taken 10 paychecks with the additional 1 hour of sick leave. Cody currently has 177 hours of sick leave banked so he will reduce this number by 10 hours to reflect the hour per paycheck deduction and it will be reflected on the accrual leave balance spreadsheet, paycheck and also a notation of it in the adjustment register.

NEW BUSINESS:

Daymon explains he went through the budget a couple weeks ago and one of the line items in the sewer budget has a budgeted amount of \$5,500 and as of March 1st the expenditures in that line item were at \$10,900. Daymon said they raised the utility rates to gain some money to make repairs at the plant and to fix some I&I problems and also an additional \$30,000 for the sewer operator salary and benefits. That only leaves approximately \$24,000 of the annual increase of \$54,000 to use on equipment purchases and I&I repairs. The I&I repairs by 4th and Adams Street was previously bid to be a \$14,000 repair all by itself. He is concerned that too much is being spent on parts and items at the plant. Neal said he made it clear after the backhoe was purchased without council authority that all transactions of significance needed to be authorized through the council.

There was concern about what has costed \$5,500 so far and Cody said the call out system was expensive and Mayor McCown said also the sampler placed at the end of the pond was an expensive piece of equipment. The meters have been installed at the end of the pond but they have to wait for better weather to completely finish the install. Neal said if the money keeps being spent at this pace, they are going to run into problems. Cody explained the water, sewer and garbage fund started out with a beginning balance \$35,000 and they are currently spending more money monthly then revenue coming into that fund which means they are diminishing the beginning balance which has started historically very low. Usually they like to have a beginning balance in Fund 401 of \$60,000. Neal would also like to see a priority list of items that need to be purchased and give them the opportunity to approve the purchase, that way they are fully informed.

Mark Young said to remember they brought Reuel in to bring the plant up to par and do away with the violations and they need to make sure they give him the resources to make that happen. Neal said they just need to have the ability to clarify what they can and can't afford. Mayor McCown said they should wait until the next council meeting and discuss the spending activity with Reuel. Mark said possibly Reuel hasn't been made aware of how things are approved for purchase and they should shore that up and make sure they stick within budget.

FINANCIAL:

Approval of Checks: Daymon Marple **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for payment. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Check Register #12643-12646 PLUS EFT Dept of Retirement
Check Register #12647-12666

Payroll: \$9,238.49
Claims: \$18,189.09
Total: \$27,427.58

ADJOURNMENT: David Jones **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM. Daymon Marple seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Ray McCown, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Cody Lord, Clerk/Treasurer