
**OMAK CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 21, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Gagné called the regular meeting of the Omak City Council to order at 7:00 PM and everyone joined in the flag salute.

COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL:

Michael Foth	Patrick Dalton, Building Official
Nattalie Cariker	Kevin Bowling, Fire Chief
Barry Freel	Jeff Koplín, Police Chief
Steve Clark	Ken Mears, Public Works Director
Walt Womack	Connie Thomas, City Clerk
Michelle Gaines	Todd McDaniel, City Administrator
Dave Womack	

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Mayor Gagné asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to be heard that are not on the agenda. Mr. Lobe with Horizon Estates, Dennis Carlton, Cheryl Starr and Richard Duck. She explained that all would have the opportunity to address Council at the end of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Member Steve Clark moved, seconded by Member Gaines, to approve the consent agenda consisting of minutes from the May 7, 2018 meeting; minutes from the special meeting from May 11, 2018; 2018 claims checks numbered 19231-19290 in the amount of \$1,010,036.68 (voided 19283). As there was no discussion and no comments from the audience, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 37-2018 – Approving the Purchase of a Used Road Grader

Member Clark moved, seconded by Member Cariker, to approve Resolution 37-2018. Public Works Director Mears told Council that the Equipment Rental Department found a used road grader to replace the 1993 Gehl road grader. The Equipment Rental Department inspected the used Lee Boy 685 and found it would meet the city's needs. This is a Special Market Conditions purchase in the amount of \$57,129.60. If purchased, the grader will be inspected by NC Machinery. If there are repairs that need to be made, they will be done prior to delivery and will not exceed the approved budget amount of \$72,000. As there were no further questions and no comments from the audience, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Resolution 38-2018 – Adopting the 2018 Water System Plan

Member Clark moved, seconded by Member Gaines, to approve Resolution 38-2018. Public Works Director Mears explained to Council that Resolution 38-2018 has been reviewed and accepted by the Department of Health. The City has been directed to proceed with the formal adoption of the 2018 Water System Plan. Upon adoption, the Department of Health will send out an official approval letter. As there were no questions and no comments from the audience, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Resolution 39-2018 – Approve Amendment No. 2 with G&O-City Levee Sewer Replacement Feasibility Study

Member Clark moved, seconded by Member Walt Womack, to approve Resolution 39-2018. Public Works Director Mears told Council that Gray & Osborne has written a scope of work for a levee sewer feasibility study. A main sewer trunk line runs under the Log Cabin Trailer Court on Okoma Drive. Gray & Osborne recommended a feasibility study to determine the best option for replacement. As there were no questions and no comments from the audience, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Richard Ames-Citizen-Utility Rate Increase

Mr. Ames owns the apartments at 116 W First Street in Omak. He explained to Council that with the rate increase his utility bill went from \$418 to \$520 a month. This is a huge increase to himself and his tenants who are on a fixed income. He shared his educational and professional background stating that he is a graduate of Washington State University and served in the Military. He also worked for Morrison Knutson which is a construction company so he understands a budget and construction. Mr. Ames said with the rate increase,

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he may have to sacrifice maintenance at his apartments to supplement the increase in the water, sewer, garbage rates. He asked Council if the job is done and what the rates will be. He also asked how the per unit costs were figured. once the sewer project is complete and how the per unit increase was calculated. Company.

Mr. Jim Lobe, owner of Horizon Estates Retirement Community located at 715 Quince. Mr. Lobe told Council that the rate increase was a big blow and surprise to all. He understands the need for infrastructure he suggested it could have been a gradual increase. He was also informed by City staff that another increase is projected in the future. He feels this is unfair.

Dennis Carlton, owner of Carlton Financial shared with Council that he remembers he and Mary Henrie approaching the Council about the construction of Wal-Mart. He said when he heard about the sewage break in the middle of Dewberry he knew the system needed to be fixed. The reason he led with Wal-Mart is that prior to construction, everyone was concerned about analyzing the dirt when they should have been looking at the sewer pipe. His mother lives in Horizon Estates and they are all on a fixed income. He reiterated what Mr. Lobe said, about the graduated increase. He would like to see relief for those who are on limited incomes.

Cheryl Starr, 410 S Juniper explained to Council that she had sent a letter to Mayor Gagné through Clerk Thomas last year regarding the rate increase. She asked that the City look for money in other ways other than increase of rates. She suggested closing City Hall, limiting hours and sharing staff with other Cities. She also suggested the City find someone that has skills in grant writing. Ms. Starr told Council that during the flood situation, her basement was filled with water. She was pumping the water out and was given conflicting directions by employees in the Public Works Department. She asked that the City have one person giving direction in situations like this. She also had a concern about people walking along the dike. She heard that City Hall was giving out information that the dike was open to the public. Areas of the dike are private property. Mayor Gagné asked if City Hall is giving out this information. Both Clerk Thomas and Administrator McDaniel replied they were not.

Richard Duck introduced himself to Council. He has been a resident of the community for more than sixty years. He asked what the rate increase was for a house in Omak. Mr. McDaniel said the average utility bill for a single-family home was about \$145 a month. Mr. McDaniel said that he has jotted down some notes as people were talking and with the Mayor's permission, he would address their questions this evening.

Member Dave Womack asked Administrator McDaniel to address some of the questions. Mr. McDaniel said that an annual rate increase is common and the concern is strictly the sewer increase for multi-units. The overall costs increase is approximately \$15 for each unit. He explained that the previous administrator, Ralph Malone had maintained a schedule for debt service. It projects how the money would come in to pay off the debt incurred by the sewer line breaks. During the budget process, Council requested the sewer rates for the residential homes align with the multi-units. Administrator McDaniel calculated the rate increase for the multi-units and those calculations brought the multi-unit sewer rate to 85% of the residential rate. The City is trying to maintain and continue sewer system improvements. Mr. McDaniel said that Mr. Ames was on target. The deferred maintenance of the sewer system is the reason we are in this situation. He finds it hard to point at past administration and Council. If they had the technology to see the failing and aging system action may have been taken. The sewer infrastructure in the main downtown has yet to be complete. There was further discussion about future increases and projections.

Mr. Carlton thinks that everyone is appreciative of the efforts of our City. He reflected on the past Mayor's, who were leaders in our community. As a member of the Omak School Board, and trying to pass a bond to construct a new school, he said he had a rude awakening. Both bonds failed and the school district is bringing in portables for the influx of students. He realizes that the City is required to follow bid laws, hire engineers and architects and pay Davis Bacon wages and appreciates that everyone works hard.

Mayor Gagné appreciates everyone coming out tonight. She appreciates everyone's concerns over the 22% rate increase all at once. She understands the fixed income and stated that some Council members are also on a fixed income. She invited everyone to participate in the budget workshops. She said the City has good quality infrastructure in the ground and the City has good people on staff and good people in our community. The discussion tonight will resonate with everyone.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Committee/Staff Reports:

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Member Walt Womack told Council that the Infrastructure Committee met and discussed agenda items and flood conditions. Fire Chief Kevin Bowling updated the Council on the current conditions. He said the river is at 17.38 feet and falling to below 17'. The river is forecasted to go up to 18.15 feet on or about May 28th which is a good thing. He continues to see basement flooding due to seepage. Benton and Asotin Street has been hit hard. The Colville Tribe has been working with the City setting up pumps in the area. He said the Public Works Department has done a good job with the backups in the storm drain system. He told Council that there are some deficiencies that will be discussed during budget time.

Building Official Dalton told Council that the Grocery Outlet is moving forward and block is going up. The Omak Senior Center has a new addition to the building. A dance hall and game room are part of the addition and he encourage people to visit. The Omak School District portables project continues to move forward.

Police Chief Koplín told Council that he has filed his candidacy for Okanogan County Sheriff. He will be out campaigning outside of work hours.

Public Works Director Mears thanked Chief Bowling for his comments. He said his crew has been working around the clock twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to protect the City from flood waters.

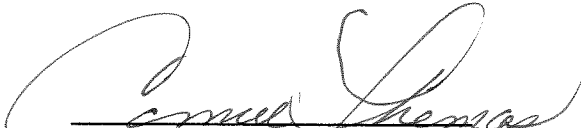
Member Cariker thanked those in attendance. She explained that Council does make tough decisions that impact the community and they don't take those decisions lightly. When looking at the replacement of infrastructure, sometimes there are bad impacts.

Member Freel told the audience that they were well heard.

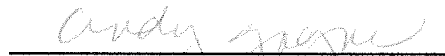
Member Gaines appreciated the comments and will take them into consideration. She understands it's a big increase and would welcome them during budget to help work through the tough items.

Mayor Gagné said the next regular meeting will be held on Monday, June 4th at 7PM and everyone is welcome to attend

As there was no further business before Council, Mayor Gagné adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.



Connie Thomas, City Clerk



Cindy Gagné, Mayor