

**CITY OF JOHN DAY
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES/AMENDED
JOHN DAY, OREGON**

September 12th, 2023

COUCILORS PRESENT:

Heather Rookstool, Mayor
David Holland, Council President
Chris Labhart, Councilor
Ron Phillips, Councilor
Sherrie Rininger, Councilor

COUNCILORS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Casey Myers, Public Works Director
Savannah Lovell, Records Clerk
Oren Wyss, Public Works

GUESTS PRESENT:

Paul Manz	John Rowell
Joyce Nodine	Ed Newby
Beth Spell	Jim Spell
Judy Schuette	Matt Molnar
Bob Pereira	Eric Bush
Susan Church	Leslie Stillwater
Kathie Stoddard	Louis Provencher
Bayley Frazier	

Agenda Item No. 1—Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Rookstool called the city council meeting to order at 6:00 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 Rookstool noted that all councilors were present.

Agenda Item No. 4—Amend or Accept Regular Agenda

Councilor Rininger would like to add something after the treatment plant updates.

Councilor Holland would like to add something about Straw to Gold.

Councilor Rininger made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 5—Consent Agenda

Items on the consent agenda for approval:

- a) Approval of Check Register
- b) Approval of Council Minutes 7/25, 7/31, 8/8, 8/22

- c) Nick Decote updated contract (see attached)
- d) Rob Gaslin Contract

Councilor Rininger made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.

Agenda Item No. 6—Public Comments

Councilor Labhart suggested adding a box to check on the sign in sheet if they have a public comment, so council is aware. Mayor Rookstool said it would be added on the sign in sheet at the next meeting.

Casey Myers stated he has dedicated 15 plus years of his life gaining certifications and keeping them current so the citizens of John Day have a competent person to serve them. He admits the Council is in a rough place, as well as the City itself. All that needs to happen in his opinion is for all of Council to be truthful to the employees and the citizens we all serve. He believes the Council needs to be educated on the many projects the City has, so they can answer questions from the public. He stated in the past when the City Manager was absent the Public Works Director was the authority. Evidently, that has changed with this change of Mayor ship and Council.

Kathy Stoddard stated on August 22nd she presented a verbal and written complaint regarding Mayor Rookstool's unprofessional and unethical behavior in public speaking about city employees in a negative manner. She asked for a follow up on her complaint. Mayor Rookstool replied saying she forwarded it on to Councilor Holland and the attorney. Councilor Holland stated he received a email from the attorney saying he would discuss this matter with him but he has not heard anything more from the City attorney.

Jim Spell said Council is fortunate to have 5 suitable applicants for the open Council positions. He stated the 5 applicants have a variety of experiences and attributes. A major decision has to be made tonight and he stated the public has the right to know what that criteria was when that selection is made.

Agenda Item No. 7—Action Items

a. Fill Council Seat(s)

- **Cody Crismon**—He notices some division within the community and he believes we all need to come together, council included to figure this out. He said not everyone is going to agree with one another but we can all respect each other's opinion. He has worked for the sheriff's office for two years and thought it was time to step out of his comfort zone and do something he has never done before.
- **Edwin Newby**—He would like to see peace on the Council. His wife and himself have raised foster kids from 2005-2021. He has been active in attending City Council meetings and school board meetings. Councilor Labhart thanked Ed for being involved in the foster care program and asked if he knew what a City Charter is. Newby said he has not read the City Charter but is willing to abide by it if he were to be appointed.
- **Bayley Frazier**—She was born and raised in Mount Vernon. She is running for councilor because she is scared for the direction the City is headed. She believes she could be a big asset to the team by bringing diversity and having an open mind. If she were to be appointed she would focus on organization and finding a City manager
- **Susan Church**—She has been concerned recently with all of the changes and division that has been taking place. One of the things she believes she can bring to the Council is

a way of visioning that looks at how change happens and having respect and communications with one another.

- **Eric Bush**—He originally applied for Council because he felt there was a need to for somebody with a background of critical thinking and strategy and someone who looks at things from a broad perspective. He is very experienced in working with City government. He stated if there is a conflict of interest concerning the City and County he will not participate.

Councilor Labhart said there were a lot of good applicants and he hopes the Council takes into consideration the people that they heard and make their vote based on what is best for the City.

Councilor Labhart made a motion to appoint Eric Bush as Councilor Seat 5, term ending in 2026. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed unanimously.

Councilor Rininger made a motion to appoint Edwin Newby as Council Seat 6, term ending in 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed 3-2. Councilor Labhart and Council President Holland being opposed.

Mayor Rookstool swore in new Council members Eric Bush and Edwin Newby.

b. Treatment/Grant Update (Nick Ducote)

There are a couple decisions that Nick Ducote would like the Council to weigh in on. A high priority for council is approving Mason, Bruce & Girard scope amendment (\$8,494) which is related to the biological work being done. This money would come out of the Cities existing grants.

Councilor Rininger made a motion to amend the contract with Mason, Bruce and Girard for \$8,494. The motion was seconded by Councilor Bush and passed 7-0.

Council came to a consensus to table the instream transfers as well as the long-term monitoring proposal until the September 26th council meeting.

Agenda Item No. 8—Councilor Rininger added statement

Councilor Rininger wanted to put on record that she requested recordings from previous meetings and wasn't able to receive all of them.

Councilor Rininger asked Councilor Holland to formally step down as Council President. Councilor Holland said that the Council voted him in as Council President and if they don't want him in that position anymore the Council can vote him out. Councilor Rininger made a motion to remove Councilor Holland as Council President. Savannah Lovell, a city employee stated that since this was added to the agenda it cannot be voted on.

Agenda Item No. 9—Councilor Holland added statement

Councilor Holland was contacted by Straw to Gold about the website that they put together for the city. They discussed how to get the link to that website put on the City of John Day website. Straw to Gold said they would be able to do that, they just need permission to do so. They need an updated credit card for the website yearly fee.

Agenda Item No. 8—Additional Department, Council or Other Comments

Tanni Sanowski asked Council if they were still looking to hire a City Manager or has that position been inherited by someone else. Mayor Rookstool said they have an executive session after this meeting with the recruiting firm to go over the next steps.

Judy Schuette thinks there were some positive things that happened at this meeting. She disagrees with what Councilor Rininger attempted to do with 2 brand new Councilors. She thinks it was irresponsible, reprehensible and she would hope that those kinds of actions will not continue.

Kathy Stoddard agreed with Judy Schuette and said if someone is going to be on the Council they should know what a City Charter is and how it operates.

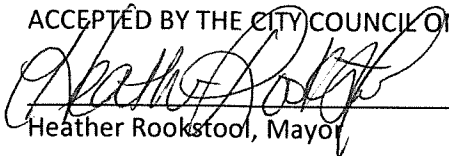
Adjourn

There being no further business before the council, Councilor Rininger moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Holland and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:

Heather Rookstool
Mayor

ACCEPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON September 26th, 2023


Heather Rookstool, Mayor