**CITY OF JOHN DAY**

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES JANUARY 9, 2024**

**COUCILORS PRESENT:**

**COUNCILORS ABSENT:**

Heather Rookstool, Mayor

David Holland, Council President

Eric Bush, Councilor

Edwin Newby, Councilor

Ron Phillips, Councilor

Sherrie Rininger, Councilor

Chris Labhart, Councilor (Virtual)

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Casey Myers, Public Works Director

Don Gabbard, Fire Chief

Joe Hitz – Contract Engineer

Rob Gaslin – Contract Finance

Nick Ducote- Contract grant writer and administrator

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

Mayor Rookstool called the city council meeting to order at 7:00 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 (due to technical issues Councilor Labhart was unable to participate in a majority of the meeting).

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

Agenda Item No. 11—Change order for 7th Street Project needs to be removed.

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

**Agenda Item No. 5—Consent Agenda**

Items on the consent agenda for approval:

1. Approval of Check Register
2. Approval of Council Minutes from November 3, 28 and December 13th, 2023

On the November 28th minutes, Agenda Item No. 7 it states the City is reliable for 25%, Councilor Bush would like that changed to “responsible” not reliable.

***Councilor Rininger made a motion to accept the consent agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed 6-1 with Councilor Labhart abstained due to difficulties with Zoom.***

**Agenda Item No. 6—Public Comments**

Shannon Adair: Ms. Adair stated her ethics complaint was dismissed. Adair stated she finally received the financial information requested and hopes financials will be available in future packets.

Athena Moline: Ms. Moline spoke regarding LED lights in the community.

**Agenda Item No. 7—Discussion and action regarding the position of Council President**

Councilor Phillips stated he did not agree with the letter to the editor Councilor Holland wrote in support of the recall. Councilor Phillips took issue with Councilor Holland signing it as Council President.

Councilor Bush elaborated on leadership and team building. Councilor Bush stated he believes Councilor Holland was inappropriate in writing the letter and does not believe he should be in a leadership position on the Council.

Councilor Holland stated the letter to the editor was his opinion and that he has only missed 2 meetings all year.

Councilor Rininger stated she feels the letter to the editor did not give the community a chance to respond and also felt signing as Council President was inappropriate.

Councilor Labhart stated the City Charter allows for the Council to elect a new Council President in 2025.

Mayor Rookstool stated she felt the letter to the editor was inappropriate and feels there has been a lack of support from Councilor Holland.

Councilor Holland stated the Mayor has expressed herself the same on her social media page and asked why his letter is different. The Mayor responded her social media page is a private page and not community wide.

***Councilor Phillips made a motion to remove Councilor Holland as Council President effective immediately. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rininger and passed 5-1 with Councilor Labhart being opposed and Councilor Holland abstaining.***

***Councilor Bush made a motion to immediately elect a Council President. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rininger and passed 5-0 with Councilor Holland and Councilor Labhart abstaining.***

***Councilor Bush made a motion to appoint Councilor Rininger as Council President. The motion was seconded by Councilor Phillips and passed 4-1 with Councilor Holland being opposed and Councilor Rininger and Councilor Labhart abstaining.***

**Agenda Item No. 8—Discussion and Council Decision to withdraw from R3**

Councilor Labhart stated only under emergency circumstances have they ever taken a vote on any item that was not on the agenda. He believes an unadvertised vote on a controversial topic doesn’t look good in the public’s perception. After discussions with the City Attorney he feels that Council did everything correctly.

**Agenda Item No. 9—Grant County Digital Update**

Councilor Bush said that things are still moving forward. He has been trying to get all of the public records transferred over and has been gathering as much information as he can.

**Agenda Item No. 10—Treatment Plant and 2023 Achievements Update**

The City has applied for additional funding for the Waste Water Treatment Project. The biological assessment has been completed. We are in the final steps of finalizing the scope of work for the final design engineering. The Purple Pipe Project is now at 95% final design. Work is beginning for the Solar Project.

**Agenda Item No. 11—Change order for 7th Street Project**

Tabled

**Agenda Item No. 12—Change order for Charolais Drive East Project**

An area along the new road alignment below the existing irrigation ditch was saturated clay type material that would not support the road. Material that the City recycled from other projects was imported and placed on the road surface to make it an all-weather surface for year-round access. A small section of the utility trench became to hard to dig with the excavator, a rock hammer was used to open up the trench which was additional equipment and labor.

***Councilor Phillips made a motion to approve the change order for Charolais Drive East Project as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Newby and passed 6-0.***

**Agenda Item No. 13—Decision on Patterson Bridge Lease**

3 bids were received.

***Councilor Bush moved to accept the bid from Oregon Underground & Utilities LLC for a 2-year contract at $1,700 a month. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rininger and passed 6-0.***

**Agenda Item No. 14—Town Hall Discussion; potential topics**

Ducote said he is able to bring boards and updates on where the City is at with the Treatment Plant and Purple Pipe. Councilor Rininger made a list of some Public Safety concerns. The Town Hall will be from 6-8pm on January 23rd at the Senior Center. Louis Provencher thinks the Town Hall would be a great opportunity for the Library Foundation to come.

**Agenda Item No. 15—City Manager Comments**

Bethel stated she would like to thank the community for welcoming her. She advised the Council the Secretary of State has notified the City about not having an audit completed. Bethel stated as soon as the City has an auditor retained the state can issue an extension. Bethel advised the City is currently without a Planner and hopes to have a contract planner contract to council soon. Bethel stated she hopes to have financials in the packets regularly soon.

**Agenda Item No. 16—Mayor and Council Comments**

Councilor Bush would like to have a discussion on the next agenda about start time for Council meeting.

Myers gave an update about OSHA. He called a company from Bend to do an asbestos survey. They did find small amounts of asbestos in the basement. The employees have been doing regularly scheduled Safety Meetings.

Jeanette Radinovich wanted to thank the Council for offering the business owners on main street the grant because it did make a difference and would like them to know she appreciated it.

Town Hall January 23rd, 2024

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:27; The next regular scheduled meeting is February 13th, 2024

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Melissa Bethel, CM