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City Council Meeting November 14th 2023

Council Present

Barbar Northington (President)
Suzanne Hood
Matt Wenick
Lyndsey Wenick

Public Present

Mike Allen
Patty Davidson
Judy Champman
Kip Mortimore
Feather Sams Huestis

Shannon Baily
Tim Keith
Mr. & Mrs. Loman

Meeting called to order by council President Barbara Northington @ 6pm
Minutes taken by City Manager/Recorder Deborah Oatman

Item 1 Open Floor;

Fire Chief Mike Allen recounted the Thursday Nov 9th evening fire that went into Friday morning at Iron Triangle Post and Pole, when the flames reached 40ft they called John Day fire department for back up. The Fire Marshal came out Monday the 13th to inspect the scene and stated that it was natural combustion. Tim Keith stated that in any operation like Iron Triangle that produces a sawdust pile, that pile will smolder forever unless it is dissipated. He also stated that Malheur Lumber solved the problem by placing a sprinkler system on top of the pile. It was suggested that we talk with Iron Triangle concerning a sprinkler system for extra protection for the city.

Mike informed that council that the fire department had some key training coming up in December and February. Councilor M. Wenick stated that he would like to see more awareness to the community of the opportunity to volunteer so anyone could respond and he wondered if it would be possible to set up some kind of text message to be distributed. Mike also asked if those living on Shirttail Creek could hear the alarm to which Councilor M. Wenick stated that his daughter could hear it but that he could not and stated that sometime in the past the city had looked at the alarm as it was not at optimum level and suggested that we look into when that was done. Others chimed in and stated that they felt it was not loud enough.

Kip stated that the properties with nuisances have worked on their properties but not all have been completed. Councilor M. Wenick responded, "So one's that haven't done stuff that we have sent letters to haven't been done, there is a fine fee in there that we put on ordinance, have we fined them yet?" The reply was no. He then stated that he had been gone for 3 months and within that time fines should have been enforced.

Item #2 Business Oregon Presentation;

Feather Sam Huestis came to give a presentation on attaining grants and funding for our next infrastructure project. She stated that 80% of their budget goes for infrastructure and the rest to business development. Their focus is on traded sector industries like forestry wood products, food and beverage, etc. Public Works Funds is probably the most heavily used program for the state. There are currently 55 projects this biennium totaling about 1000,000,000, 43 of those projects are in the rural areas which is primarily a loan program which can be used for planning design construction, or an emergency as a result of a disaster. This program would be used the most if something arises and you need money quick. Feather further stated that there are not a lot of grants out there to be had. The second fund is Wastewater fund which Business Oregon funded with CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) and Wastewater

Funds for Seneca's Lagoon Project that just finished. Considering these funds Councilor L Wenick asked if we had informed Feather of our new lagoons overflowing this past winter. Feather asked if we were thinking of doing another project. Councilor M. Wenick stated that part of the problem is faulty pipes in every ally and this would be worth talking about. Feather stated that we get an engineering record to which Deborah stated that HECO has the plans already drawn up, only the dollar amounts would change when we pursued the project. Feather stated that if we want to pursue the project, we have a conversation with HECO who will do an intake and we can run different scenarios of the cost and the debt, which the majority would be a loan. In order for you to be eligible for the CDBG you have to meet certain low to moderate income thresholds and that is 51% or higher, currently according to the census data Seneca is a 36%, a big gap to close. An income survey would have to be done. Councilor M. Wenick stated that this had been done to get the lagoon project accomplished. Feather stated that if Seneca wanted, she would connect us with the two organizations that do surveys, OSU and RCC. If Seneca was eligible for CDBG it could pull upwards to \$2.5 million of funding for a public works project and up to \$1.5 for the community hall. The difficult part would be spending \$10,000 to ask the question, if not everyone responds and you do not meet the 51%, you're out that money. Other programs, the Oregon Brown field Redevelopment fund for businesses and local governments that is funded with state lottery funds, and Oregon Coalitions of Brownfields Cleanup fund, which is federal EPA money. Feather stated that one of them is for taking a look and assess what's going on and the other is we will pay to remediate what's happened. The Tap program is funds dedicated to digital equity, with these funds we could acquire tablets, computers, and laptops to meet the needs of the community.

Item #3 Solutions Audit

Motion was made by Councilor M. Wenick to accept Solutions CPA's proposal for 2023-24 audit, seconded by Councilor L. Wenick, all in favor and motion passed.

Motion was made by Councilor M. Wenick to accept the resolution setting forth proposed plan of action pertaining to deficiencies noted in the annual audit report, seconded by Councilor L. Wenick, all in favor and motion passed.

Motion was made by Councilor L. Wenick to approve the plan of action for the city of Seneca that will be sent to the office of the Secretary of State, seconded by Councilor Hood, all in favor and motion passed.

Item #4 Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Councilor M. Wenick to approve the June minutes, seconded by Councilor Hood, all in favor and motion passed.

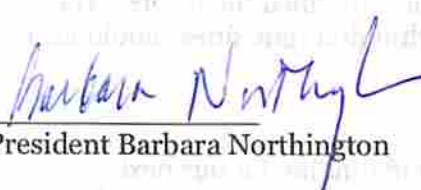
Motion was made by Councilor Hood to approve the October minutes, seconded by Councilor M. Wenick, all in favor and motion passed.

Item #5 Bills Before Council

Motion was made by Councilor M. Wenick to pay bills, seconded by Councilor Hood, all in favor and motion passed.

Council President Northington adjourned the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Attest:


President Barbara Northington