

Lewiston City Council
Council Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2021
City Hall – 7:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

City Council meeting called to order by Mayor Beth Carlson on Wednesday, July 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Present (5): Mayor Beth Carlson, Councilor Ben Borchardt, Councilor Nick Ebnet, Councilor Dan Robertson.

Not Present (1): Councilor Carol Boynton.

Also Present: Interim City Administrator Bobby Falcon, Police Chief Scott Yeiter, Assistant Ambulance Director Nathan Hedlund, Polly Calhoun.

4. Agenda Changes and Additions

Add item: #8.1 Fire Department Report.

Remove item: #10 EDA Recommendation for Sale of Property.

Councilor Robertson motioned for approval of the agenda with changes presented. Seconded by Councilor Borchardt. Motion Approved 4-0.

5. Adopt Consent Agenda

A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2021

B. Accounts Payable

C. Accounts Payable #2

Councilor Robertson motioned to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilor Ebnet. Motion Approved 3-0. Mayor Carlson abstained.

6. Citizens' Concerns

None

7. Ambulance Report

Nathan Hedlund reports that ambulance run numbers are at 116 through the end of June and 127 year-to-date. Majority of calls (50%) are coming in during the day. Ambulance staff roster is 26 total for the department and comprised of 19 EMTs, 6 EMR, and 1 dedicated driver. Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) course is being scheduled for this fall. New truck is on order with delays being experienced. A few changes to the initial specification were needed. Delivery timeframe for new unit is unclear but expected in the first half of 2022. Matt Essig is out on leave and returns July 26th. Councilor Robertson asked about COVID high-risk call tracking. No specifics available right now but may be available from the Ambulance Director. Mayor Carlson asked about administrative help, Hedlund reports that support has been good during Matt's time away. Councilor Robertson asked for additional information on the truck. Hedlund states that it is not known yet whether the chassis will be a 2021 or 2022 model year. The truck committee is pleased with the final specs and plans to have those finalized by the end of the week. Horton is the manufacturer. Mayor Carlson extends a thank you to those who have been filling in with ambulance tasks.

8. Police Report

Monthly report is included in the packet. Intern is still working with Lewiston Police Department.

8.1 Fire Department

Councilor Robertson reports that four fire department personnel are traveling to Florida on Monday to do a final inspection on the new tanker. Once approved it will be driven to Minnesota for additional outfitting. The department estimates arrival of unit in approximately one month.

9. Resolution #2021-12 – ARPA Funds

Accepting American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Estimate the City will receive \$180,000 split 50/50 between 2021 and 2022.

Councilor Borchardt motioned to adopt resolution 2021-12. Seconded by Councilor Robertson. Motion Approved 4-0.

10. Acting Clerk Report – Water Claim and Deputy Clerk Position

Acting City Clerk Scott Yeiter indicated that the water billing error claim was denied by our insurance company LMC. The type of loss we incurred is not covered. The city has not yet incurred a loss due to the ability to charge for previous water usage. The City Attorney is involved in the matter and researching options that range from doing nothing to collecting as far back as six years. Corrections have been made in the billing system. Correction of billing errors will be monitored to ensure our system applies to proper changes. Largest water customer was contacted regarding billing errors. The Deputy Clerk position was not filled. The person offered the position did not show up and will be discussed under committee meeting updates.

11. PERA – Membership for Elected Officials

Interim City Administrator Bobby Falcon discussed PERA for Elected Officials. City Council is eligible for PERA retirement accounts for elected officials. A Member would contribute 5% with a city match of 5%. If enrolled, it would be in lieu of social security contributions.

12. Committee Meeting Updates – Public Works, EDA, Personnel

Councilor Ben Borchardt discussed the public works meeting held on July 12th. WAC-SAC was reviewed as an option. Water billing was reviewed, and the committee is waiting on some additional information from the City Attorney. ARPA fund use was discussed and included improvements to the water meter system which will assist human errors and efficiency. Nuisance property will be managed through strict adherence to city code as written. Mayor Carlson discussed EDA special meetings that were held to discuss a potential sale of EDA owned property on Main Street. No EDA action was taken on this matter. Acting City Clerk Yeiter discussed personnel meetings held. The matter of whether to go with a City Administrator or a City Clerk was discussed at a recent personnel meeting. The committee recommends that the city should retain its City Administrator form of government. The committee recommends that the interim tag be removed from Bobby Falcon's employment status, and he be named the permanent City Administrator. The committee recommends the current rate of pay remain unchanged and that would be reviewed at 6 months of employment and again at the conclusion of his 12-month probationary period. The committee recommends the probationary period be retroactive to Mr. Falcon's first day of employment, July 6th. Mr. Falcon would be eligible for all benefits available to full-time city employees.

Councilor Robertson motioned to accept the personnel committee's recommendations as stated. Seconded by Councilor Ebnet. Motion Approved 4-0.

City Administrator Falcon discussed the Deputy Clerk position. The previous offer of employment for this position accepted and later declined by the candidate. The personnel committee met and is recommending that we make an offer to the person who was ranked 2nd. His name is Ryan Kusch. Ryan was offered the rate of 18.00/hr. and accepted the conditional offer contingent on background checks, drug screen, and city council approval. His start date is estimated to be July 19, 2021.

Mayor Carlson motioned to approve the conditional offer of employment for Ryan Kusch pending conditional items, start date of July 19, 2021, with a starting wage of 18.00 an hour. Seconded by Councilor Robertson. Motion Approved 4-0.

Mayor Carlson discussed additional items from the personnel committee meeting held July 13th. Personnel Policy and City Code need to be updated. City Administrator Falcon mentioned potentially using an electronic option for delivery of personnel policy training which the police department currently utilizes for police officers. Acting City Clerk Yeiter mentioned that a resolution will be coming for the next meeting regarding authorized signers. Councilor Ben Borchardt asked about Banyon training for employees. City Administrator Falcon stated that Banyon training is being looked at being completed while city hall remains closed as the training takes place over a three-day period.

13. COVID-19 – Information and Updates

ARPA funds are expected soon and estimated at approximately \$90,000 for 2021.

14. Additional Council Concerns

Councilor Ebnet mentioned concerns that heavy truck traffic is having a negative impact on new roads. He plans to discuss with Curt. City Administrator Falcon mentioned that we did receive a complaint, Curt has looked at it, and we have reached out to the contractor to inquire about warranty. Councilor Ebnet discussed unified garbage and the possibility of a preferred garbage hauler. A previous committee reviewed this, and no action was taken at that time. Councilor Robertson requests that the budget process begins soon. Mayor Carlson stated that we are likely going to see a different format this year in anticipation of using Banyon versus a spreadsheet. Councilor Borchardt requested update on public works issues concerning the Aherns property which needs work on a curb, and Feed and Produce's fence on First Street. Mayor Carlson stated that concerning the fence, Curt had mentioned that the delay was due to the contractor's schedule. Mayor Carlson extended a welcome to City Administrator Falcon and expressed thanks for the hiring of office help. City Administrator Falcon mentioned a lift station issue caused by a contractor with sewer backed up into one residence.

15. Adjourn

Councilor Robertson motioned to adjourn the city council meeting. Seconded by Councilor Ebnet. Motion Approved 4-0.

The city council meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m. on July 14, 2021.