

**CITY OF UMATILLA
COUNCIL MEETING
April 07, 2015**

- 1. CALLED TO ORDER:** Mayor Trott called the regular council meeting to order at 7:00pm.
- 2. ROLL CALL:**
 - PRESENT:** Councilors Dedrick, Farnsworth, Fenton, and TenEyck.
 - ABSENT:** Councilors Ray and Lougee.
 - STAFF PRESENT:** Recorder Sandoval, City Manager Ward, Finance Director Ince, Planner Searles, Public Works Director Pelleberg, and Chief Huxel.
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited at 7:01pm.
- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** It was moved by Councilor Fenton to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Farnsworth. Voted 4-0. Motion carried.
- 5. PRESENTATION:**
 - 5.1 Officer Wright announced that these Reserve Officers completed a 6 week program at the Bi-County academy Oath of Office for Police Reserve Officer Graduates. Municipal Judge Krogh administered the oath of office to five Umatilla Police Department reserve offers who recently completed the Reserve Academy. They were Kimberly Carrier, Thalia Leon, Calvin Meade, Jordan Robeson, and Fernando Sanchez.
 - 5.2 A presentation was conducted by Casey White-Zollman, the Vice President of Public Relations for Blue Mountain Community College. The presentation covered information gathered during a survey and research project. They were asking the council to endorse the Blue Mountain Community Bond, which will help with repairs, maintenance, and development.
- 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Councilor Farnsworth moved to approve minutes from March 03, 2015. Councilor Fenton seconded the motion. Voted 4-0. Motion carried.
- 7. PUBLIC COMMENT:**
 - 7.1 John Nichols – Within the last 6-7 years one of our city employees was mandated with a survey. It gave good guidelines as to a sense of direction with Parks and Rec, how money was supposed to be spent and a few other things. Since then he has joined the ranks with others of fixed income. The demand on his income is coming faster than COLAs, Cost of Living Allowances. Don't be surprised if we get another negative. 50-60% of Umatilla is on fixed income. Nothing would tickle him more than having the Taj Mahal for a community. There has got to be some serious looking at where the money is coming from and how fast you're going to get it. Otherwise, he's going to have to put his tail between his legs and ask for a waiver or consideration on his water and sewer bill, which he refused to do when he first started. He didn't think he needed to, but he is not too far away from it. Please spend money wisely. He doesn't know where we are getting some of the money from budgets and what have you for some of the things that are coming down the pipe. He keeps getting told not to worry about it because it will take care of itself.
 - 7.2 Karen Hutchinson Talaski – Has been noticing a group of individuals at the exits as you come into Umatilla and it really bothers her because when you come into Umatilla it doesn't

look too great. Now there are these people who hang out begging. She understand people have offered jobs and food and refused the offers. Those individuals just want money. She doesn't know if there is anything that the City can do about it or if it is something that needs to be discussed with the state. It gives us a bad impression and we see between 10-12 thousand people who come to the community just at the Visitor's Center. That does not count all the people that come through Umatilla. That is a lot of people who see something that looks pretty bad and she just wanted to vocalize that she felt that way.

They also had a great Easter egg hunt. They had 200 kids and 2000 eggs and it was over in 75 seconds. Also want to commend the City for a great cleanup day. It is amazing what a little elbow grease, some help, and a lot of dumpsters could do for our community. It really makes her feel proud to work here and she is sure people who live here should be proud as well.

7.3 Jack McWhinnie – He would have come sooner, but he was weak and still weak but he wanted to get this over with. So, he has to rely on his note more than talking. He is resigning after 4 years from the Code Improvement Board. He could just write a letter and be done with it, but he wants to tell all the audience why he is resigning: the condition of the City and the way it looks. The City needs a Code Enforcement Person that all he or she does is the codes. Right now Tisa works more on animals than codes, and she needs helps. Yes, the annual clean up helps, but what about the rest of year? The City of Umatilla can be a nice City. It has two rivers, but the trouble with the City is how it looks, trash, junk, trees with bushes laying around, and even a toilet right on main street, right across Umatilla Suites. It has been there for who knows how long. Also, the sign that is busted, never fixed used to be Uncle Charlie's Tavern and to make matters worse, two strip clubs. He has been on the Code Improvement Board for 4 years. He was warned by a number of people telling him it was not worth it, but he wanted to prove them wrong. He got on the board to protect the good property owner and the codes, and to give a little of himself to make the City better. He wasted 4 years. Yes, you can say, why did he last 4 years? He was hoping he can help the City make a change to make it better. He met several times with Melvin Ray to discuss how to make the City better, they had come to conclusion that Public Works Director Pelleberg should take over the Code Improvement Board. At one of the Board meetings it was discussed that Russ should take over the CIB. It was all four members who had decided to ask that. The City Manager, he likes as a person, but he fears he doesn't get out of the office to see what is happening in the City. If he did, the City would not look like it is. If anyone has anything to say he would like to be able to respond even if it is at the end of the meeting. He could go on and on, but he presumes the audience gets the message about how he feels. It's more than a paycheck, its pride in the community. Property owners are stuck, either they are too old or property has devalued they would take a loss if they moved. Maybe his speech tonight might change someone. He is not mad but more disappointed than anything else.

7.4 Judy Simmons – Just wanted to give a shout out to anyone who wants to help. In the past Umatilla Landing Days has had 2 boats volunteer their time, so that they could have an average of 50 rides an hour for about 6 hours. One of the boats has backed out, the big one and they are lucky they will be able to give out 50 rides in total. If anyone knows of anybody who has a boat and would like to volunteer their time she would like to hear from them.

8. CONSENT AGENDA:

It was moved by Councilor TenEyck to approve items 8.1 Paid Invoices, and 8.2 Court Report. It was seconded by Councilor Fenton. Voted 4-0. Motion Carried.

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

11. NEW BUSINESS:

11.1 Resolution No. 02-2015 – Water and Sewer Rate Adjustments. Manager Ward explained that a couple years ago the City raised water rates for the 1st time in 15 years, and the following year sewer rates were raised for the first time in 16 years. Both of those increases were very significant rate increases due to the neglect of looking at those programs for so long. At the time we promised that we would not wait that long, we would come back with more frequent lesser increases as needed. Looking at both water and sewer we are not able to put the desired level of money into the reserve each year to grow our water and sewer reserves. So, we are preparing for the future. In those 15 years period where we didn't make any rate increases we took money out of the reserve to pay for day-to-day operations. We want to avoid being back in that position. This is the reason Resolution 02-2015 is being presented to increase water and sewer. The League of Oregon Cities recently released their studies on water and sewer rates, and Umatilla is well below average water rates both State wide and in Eastern Oregon, and slightly below average in sewer rates, but still below average both in the State and Eastern Oregon. Even with these increases we are still doing a decent job of managing our water and sewer. Our rates are lower than other communities. We did get notice from Sanitary Disposal that we are looking at 9% increase for the next physical year. It was moved to approve Resolution No. 02-2015 by Councilor TenEyck. It was seconded by Councilor Dedrick. Roll call: Dedrick – aye; Farnsworth – aye; Fenton – no; TenEyck – aye. Voted: 3-1. Motion Carried.

11.2 Resolution No. 03-2015 – Declaring Surplus Property. The Police Department has a 2006 Ford Crown Victoria VIN#2FAFP71W76X114711 available to be declared surplus. It was moved by Councilor Fenton to approve Resolution No. 03-2015. Motion was seconded by Councilor Farnsworth. Voted: 4-0. Motion Carried.

11.3 Library District Agreement. Manager Ward explained that The Umatilla County Special District developed a new agreement that refreshes the relationship between the Library District and the individual libraries that it serves throughout the county. He believes the old agreement was old and not up to date. It does not change the funding formula of those county funds. It should not have any effect on the funding of our library. It should not have any effect on how our library relates to the county district, and should enhance the library and the library patrons. He recommends approval of the District agreement. Councilor Farnsworth moved to accept the new Library District Agreement. It was seconded by Councilor TenEyck. Voted: 4-0. Motion Carried.

11.4 National Correction Workers Week Proclamation. May 3rd – May 9th was declared by Mayor Trott as TRCI Employee Recognition Week.

11.5 Bargaining Agreement with Umatilla Safety Association. Manager Ward explained that our Police Department were the only employees under a collective bargaining agreement. The agreement is a 3 year agreement. Wages were approached same as last year, which is comparing wages to Hermiston and not trying to close that gap, but narrow the gap. Whatever that gap was with City employees we narrowed it by 20%. That was the approached that was taken this year as well. We are narrowing the gap for what we pay our police officers and City employees. We are trying to keep competitive wages. There are other changes that deals with leave, which were discussed by the Chief and Manager Ward. Councilor Fenton asked about the salary increase. Manager Ward explained that salary would increase by 5% this fiscal year, and 3.5% each subsequent year. It was unanimously concurred by present Council Members for the agreement to be established.

12. CORRESPONDENCE: None.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Trott opened Public Comment at 7:59pm.

13.1 Craig Simmons – Missed the gentleman's name who resigned from the Code Improvement Board. Mayor Trott explained who the former member was, Mr. McWhinnie. Mr. Simmons continued stating that he had lived in Umatilla for 4, almost 5 years. He does not believe that Mr. McWhinnie's efforts on the committee were in vain. In the past 4 years, this town has really improved its appearance, as far as the ordinance enforcement has gone. When he first moved here, from Wisconsin where they don't have a lot of junk, they don't have a lot of trash, usually the slow plows push it away. The RV Park that used to be a real mess. That has cleaned up since they moved here. Along 5th street has cleaned up. It didn't just start with the cleanup day, it start before that. So, he would like to commend Mr. McWhinnie for his efforts and he does not agree that it was a waste time. He believes it was hard work but worth doing. He hopes someone steps up to continue the work.

13.2 Jack McWhinnie – He is on two other boards, and he can see more things being done and he can see more things being done. Let someone else take over. About the water and about the trash. This community is a hard working community. There are good people in this town for the most part, but they don't make the wages like they do in other areas like Hermiston, or Tri-Cities. Like John said there is a lot of people who live on a fixed income. You're going to raise that water rates, more brown lawns, and more people are going to throw trash. He feels sorry for those people because like John said it's tough to live on a fixed income, and the people don't make the money like they do in other communities, but they are hard workers and they try to make ends meet. Then you see a raise here and raise there.

13.3 Jody Brittain – The last two months she has had to go to Tri-Cities every day for 6 weeks. On her route to Tri-Cities and on her way back, you come into Umatilla and there are those people standing on the corner. It gives us a bad image, it just looks bad. It is always the same people, they have routines, and they have it worked out to where they have schedules. They are using wheel chairs when they don't need them. There is a lady who used it because she does need it. She would like to know if there is some way that we can stop those people. They have been offered jobs to get them off the street, they refuse. They have been offered pet food, for the pets they now carry for sympathy, they have refused the pet food, and want money instead. They stand on the corner of the post office, they stand on both side of the street, on at Crossroads, one at the Port Entry. They are a nuisance. They are trashy. With the season coming on, and travelers coming to our area, a lot of those travelers don't even know Umatilla exists. All they see is the Crossroad. Then you have all these people standing there and it's not good for us. She has lived in Umatilla for 30 years, and has seen Umatilla go downhill. This has put the nail in the coffin. She doesn't know what to do about it. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

13.4 John Nichols - Try a littering citation. Other communities have done it and it worked rather well. If nothing else, the corner will get cleaned up.

13.5 Andy Stapleton – He has a lot of stuff missing. Propane tanks have come up missing. He knows where they went. He found 15 propane tanks. He went to the river down by where the homeless people live. He found his rakes, shovels, crack pipes, and that is what he believes they use the propane tanks – to make whatever they need to use. He turned his cheek and told himself they need stuff, but when it comes to this it is not getting out of hand. He doesn't know how to protect his property anymore. He has put up fences, he has put wire around his gardens, and his vegetables have gone missing. He told them that if they needed

anything to just ask him for it, that he would give it to them. He wanted to thank Jack for his time spent on the committee and he has seen the effort that he has put in. He was really involved in cleaning up.

13.6 Betty Nobles – She would like to applaud all the people who helped with the cleanup day. She agrees that they need to get rid of the people down there. Everyone that comes into Umatilla are confronted by people running up to their window begging for money. They should be addressed and should be ticketed. There has been many changes in Umatilla. There used to be 88 saloons in Umatilla. Now we are down to just a few, but we still have strip joints covering up the beautiful murals that exist in our town. They have those arrows with LED lights, and that fence is a billboard, that says Honey Buns Hideout. She thought our murals were protected. She would like to see that addressed. Thanked Jack for all his efforts.

14. MAYOR'S MESSAGE:

14.1 Thanked the citizens, councilors, and staff who worked that past weekend with the city cleanup. We were successful with what we did for the second year running. Our punch list from last year was 4 pages long and pared down to a page, which is a testament to how much change for better we have done over the past year. He wanted to address the comments regarding the cost of City services, particularly, the water services. The City staff and the elected officials are doing their best to be good stewards of the public money. The City of Umatilla is no different than any other city in Eastern Oregon or anywhere in the State or in terms of the federal government in terms of infrastructure. The reason the City is here is to provide essential services to its citizens. We are an older City, and if you look at some of the history of the water system in particular and go back a number of years, we had a substantial water break that occurred in the McNary area in about 2005 time frame and that cost us about half a million dollars. The check that he signed is was about \$526,000.00. We have an aging infrastructure. The longer it goes, the worse it gets. Aging structures after a while break, and they have to be fixed. The City does not have the leisure to have a water main break, and say oops you have to deal with the water because we don't have enough money to fix the break or we don't enough funds to have someone go down there to turn off the valve. Somewhere, somehow, whether it is Umatilla or anyplace else, we have to fix what is broken. We have to do our best to see that our aging infrastructure is repaired in a timely manner. Somebody has to pay for it. Unfortunately, that somebody is us. He understands that people have tight budgets, and fixed income people have tighter budgets and we all share the responsibility. He honestly does not know what else we can do.

The comments about the people down by the stop light, and that issue, the City and staff are well aware of it. Those people are protected under State law, and under the Constitution. We can't go in willy-nilly and say you can't do this or you can't do that, and get in litigation and have the State come in to intervene. We know what you are talking about and understand. WE have the same misgiving about what the citizens see. We saw the situation with the homeless when we had the community cleanup week. We are trying to do something, however, it is not an easy fix.

15. STAFF REPORT:

15.1 As mentioned by Mayor Trott, we went from 4 pages of properties that needed assistance to 1 page, but last year we paid for 7 dumpsters. This year we will pay for 10-12 dumpsters.

We are close to closing the doors with the Port Settlement and are excited to become partners with the Port.

Wanapa Industrial Project has seen a flurry of activity. A grant has been secured to develop that land. They will be developing roads, water, and sewers.

Port Commissioners will resurrect the Port Road/County Real Estate transfer. The City will take over Bud Draper Road, Roxbury Road, and Beach Access Road.

We are still working on sound system improvements.

Manager Ward will be absent on starting April 21st and be back April 30th.

16. COUNCIL INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:

15.1 Councilor TenEyck – Pleased with the efforts throughout the week on Slam Dunk the Junk. He also echoes everyone’s feelings and sentiments in regards to panhandler situation. It is on our radar and we are working on it.

15.2 Councilor Fenton - Grass across the street looks nice. Wanted to know if there was anything being done about the RV that seems to be abandoned. Chief Huxel explained that they are actively working on it, but have been unable to make contact.

15.3 Councilor Farnsworth – We did a phenomenal job. Thanked the Chief, Russ, and Tisa for doing work on cleaning up the homeless camp. Appreciates the park across the street. We are making changes, slowly, but surely.

15.4 Councilor Dedrick – Wanted to thank Jackie, Nanci, and Russ for the preparation work on the cleanup event. She would like to see more faces next year, and is thankful that we had the help we had. We will make sure that we do things properly in regards to the panhandler situation. She suggest to let people know that they should give them food, water, or dog food and if they don’t want it, then you know they don’t have a need.

17. AJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

18. RECONVENE: None.

19. ADJOURN: Next meeting will be Tuesday, April 21, 201 for the Budget Committee meeting at 7:00pm. It was moved by Councilor Farnsworth to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dedrick. Voted 4-0. Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:32pm.

David Trott – Mayor

ATTEST:

Nanci Sandoval – City Recorder