

MINUTES OF THE NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON

July 17, 2023

A regular meeting of the Newport City Council was held on July 17, 2023, at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, City Hall, 200 S. Washington Avenue, Newport, Washington, with the following present:

	Keith Campbell	Mayor
	Abby Gribi	City Administrator
	Nickole North	Clerk/Treasurer
Kenneth Smith		Councilmember (Absent)
Nathan Weathers		Councilmember
Jami Sears		Councilmember
Mark Zorica		Mayor Pro Tem
Nathan Longly		Councilmember

Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. This was followed by roll call and the pledge of allegiance. Councilmember Zorica moved to excuse Councilmember Smith's absence; Councilmember Sears seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES:

Councilmember Longly moved to approve the agenda and the minutes from the July 03, 2023 Council Meeting; Councilmember Weathers seconded. Motion carried.

MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Mayor Campbell was honored to attend a ribbon cutting for the opening of the RV Park today. The Rough Stock Rodeo and Veteran Stand Down was last weekend as well.

Councilmember Longly witnessed someone driving through the City Park on a dirt bike. He wanted to reiterate that no horses or off road vehicles are allowed in any City Park. He also witnessed a child almost get hit that was riding a Lime Scooter. He encouraged citizens driving to be cautious when driving around children on the scooters since they don't always pay attention.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

Interviews for the RV Park Host took place and an offer will be made soon with the host in place later this week.

The Transportation Improvement Plan is entered into SAW so when funding becomes available for road improvements, the City can apply and qualify for funding.

Administrator Gribi spoke of several street projects that she will be asking for Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) funding for. She recommends one project per year to not stretch the

staff too thin. She also spoke about several other street projects that she is working on scheduling for the next few years.

Tomorrow she will be meeting with the Interim Planner regarding the Comp Plan.

There was discussion regarding opening another marijuana retail store within city limits. The interested party would like the Council to convert the Little People's Park into a Dog Park so that Council could change the distance restriction. This would allow him to open the store at the 420 building on State Route 2. The Council was in agreement that the use of the park would not be changed.

STAFF COMMENTS:

City Administrator Gribi gave the Wastewater/Water Treatment update for Superintendent Josh Howard. He has been short staffed and working many hours. They are behind on maintenance right now and the belt press is currently down. A quarter of the southside sewer lines have been jetted. The Wastewater Treatment Plant has had no violations since his last report to Council. Interviews will be held soon to hire another operator since he is down one operator at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He has been working on getting engineering done to update the skid which will make it so he doesn't have to use processed water at the plant. He is hoping to get the new hire trained within 90 days and certified within 2 years.

Police Chief Nelson gave a law enforcement update. Calls for service were 154 in April, 168 in May and 188 in June. A School Resource Officer will be in place at the school in August. One additional police officer will be hired in September. Currently there are two applicants. August 1st from 5:00-8:00 PM will be National Night Out and will be a fun time for all. The new police vehicle purchased last year should be here by September 30th. Once this vehicle arrives Chief Nelson will be surplus the oldest police vehicle. The Department passed the Access security audit. Sector, which will allow the ticket process in the patrol vehicles to be paperless, should be up and running within two weeks.

Public Works Director North gave a public works update. There is a leak currently which is using a lot of water. He thinks that one of the water tanks has a leak and a leak was found at the Post Office. He recommends doing a yearly aqua freed maintenance on the wells to keep them producing at their capacity. The crew has been working on the RV Park a lot and weed control on the sidewalks. Councilmember Sears asked about recycling the water at the Splash Park for irrigation. This has been discussed for a future project.

Clerk/Treasurer North gave a financial update. The third quarter cash and investments ended at \$4,339,935, which was an increase from the last quarter of \$386,410. Sales tax revenue for the second quarter increased by \$24,294 from last year's second quarter. This is in line with the increase from the first quarter as well so it will be interesting to see if this trend continues. Property tax revenue for the second quarter increased by \$6,444 from last year's second quarter. There are currently 6 delinquent accounts totaling \$12,873. Three of these are off for non-payment and three are making payments. The delinquent accounts are down from the first quarter.

NEW BUSINESS:

A public hearing to discuss revenue sources for the year 2024 was opened at 6:42 PM. City Administrator Gribi spoke about a proposed fire levy to be placed on the ballot this Fall. She stated that the City had its own Volunteer Fire Department for years and then entered into a contract with Fire District 4. That agreement is expiring soon and none of the surrounding fire departments want to enter into an agreement for the existing amount. The current annual fire budget is \$68,500 which includes the contract, repair and maintenance and insurance. The fire levy would be \$1.00 per 1000 and would bring in around \$200,000 per year. The City is no longer able to provide this service without resources from the public that will be served. Without fire service in the City, the resident's homeowner's insurance rates will likely go up. Robert Rosencrantz, residing at 615 West Pine Apt #14, Newport, WA, as a private citizen urged the Council to make the levy the same dollar amount as surrounding fire districts so that there is parity. There were no other public comments and the public hearing was closed at 6:55 PM.

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve Resolution 20230717 authorizing submission to the voters at the general election for proposition which would allow the City of Newport to implement an additional property tax for fire protections services; Councilmember Longly seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Longly moved to approve Resolution 20230718 updating the parks owned by the City of Newport procedures and regulations; Councilmember Weathers seconded. Motion carried.

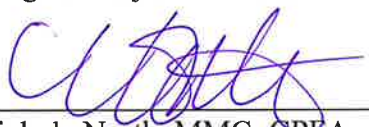
BILLS & PAYROLL:

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve the bills and payroll; Councilmember Sears seconded. Motion carried.

CLAIMS CHECKS 65742-65767	\$28,998.04
CLAIMS EFT 07/01/2023 Run 1-12	\$30,623.54
CLAIMS DIRECT PAY 07/11/2023 Run 1-6	\$6,950.00
PAYROLL E-CHECKS 1459-1467; Dir Deposit Run 07/05/2023	\$71,269.90

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM.

Attest: 

Nickole North, MMC, CPFA
Clerk/Treasurer

By: 

Keith Campbell
Mayor