

MINUTES OF THE NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON
November 20, 2023

A regular meeting of the Newport City Council was held on November 20, 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
Nathan Weathers		Councilmember
Jami Sears		Councilmember (Absent)
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 Weathers moved to excuse Councilmember Sears' absence; Councilmember Zorica seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES:

Councilmember Longly moved to approve the agenda and the minutes from the November 06, 2023 Council Meeting; Councilmember Smith seconded. Motion carried.

MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Mayor Campbell gave his heartfelt thanks to the citizens of Newport who approved the fire levy. He promised to be good stewards of the money. Councilmember Longly also thanked the voters and stated that it was much needed. He also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!

It was announced that the Chamber is putting on an event this weekend which will include the tree lighting. Mayor Campbell wished everyone a Happy Holiday and wished everyone to be safe.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Kelly Driver, Executive Director of the Port of Pend Oreille located at 1981 Black Road, in Usk, WA asked the Council for a letter of recommendation for the PORT to be the ADO of the Pend Orielle County Economic Development. The letter is needed by November 30th. Councilmember Longly moved to draft a recommendation letter for the Port as requested; Councilmember Smith seconded. Councilmember Zorica abstained due to being on the EDC board. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

Administrator Gribi asked the Council to utilize the funds from the garbage utility tax this year to purchase some needed items and to do some much needed repairs. Councilmember Zorica moved to allow the \$40,000 in garbage utility tax to be used to purchase a V-Plow for the Plants to keep them and the alleys free of snow in case of needed maintenance \$13,500; electric tarps for the Public Works Department dump trucks to increase employee safety \$5,500; rebuild the water truck \$10,000; rebuild the street sweeper \$11,000; Councilmember Longly seconded. Motion carried.

A letter ending the contract with Fire District 4 has been sent. Thirty days' notice was required and it was mailed last week. POEMS is closing down at the end of this month. Administrator Gribi met with the South Pend Oreille Fire and Rescue Commissioners; she reviewed the terms that were discussed with the Council. They are proposing a 24/7 fire station. Councilmember Longly moved to give Administrator Gribi latitude to work with SPOFR to allow them to occupy the space and start to make improvements through December 31, 2023 when an agreement can be reached, with a spending limit of up to \$12,000; Councilmember Zorica seconded. Motion carried.

City Administrator Gribi stated that there will be two meetings in December but that she would like to skip the first meeting in January because of the short turnaround. She recommended continuing the second meeting in January (the 16th) to Friday the 19th for final approval of 2023 bills due to the City's book being required to be open until the 20th. The Council was in agreement with this.

NEW BUSINESS:

A NEW Health update was given by Lindsey Ruivivar regarding the new facility that will be opening in Newport soon.

A public hearing to discuss revenue sources for the year 2024 was opened at 7:06 PM. There was a great deal of discussion regarding needed water and sewer rate increases. The majority of the Council agree that it is a needed increase. Councilmember Zorica understands the need but felt bad about the proposed increase. There was also discussion regarding implementing a fence permit fee to ensure that fences are not impeding the view of traffic on a corner or being built over utilities in the City's right of way. The public hearing was closed at 7:45 PM with no public comment.

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve Resolution 20231120 revoking all prior fee resolutions and adopting a new fee schedule with the amended effective date of January 01, 2024; Councilmember Longly seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Longly moved to approve Resolution 20231121 amending Resolution 02062023 to remove the section entitled "Water and Sewer Fees"; Councilmember Weathers seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Longly moved to approve Resolution 20231122 adopting and amending rates and charges for water and sewer utility services; establishing schedule and establishing effective date; Councilmember Weathers seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Weathers moved to approve the levy certification requesting a levy amount of up to \$578,000 be collected in 2024 as provided in the City's budget; Councilmember Smith seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve Resolution 20231123 adopting an updated water use efficiency program; Councilmember Longly seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Weathers moved to approve Agreement NP2024-01 with Pend Oreille County for IT services from January 01, 2024 to December 31, 2026; Councilmember Zorica seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Longly moved to approve the Janitor job description and set their salary at a flat rate of \$850.00 per month with no benefits and a 10 hour work week schedule; Councilmember Smith seconded. Motion carried.


BILLS & PAYROLL:

Councilmember Longly moved to approve the bills and payroll; Councilmember Weathers seconded. Motion carried.


CLAIMS CHECKS 65971-65998	\$328,609.19
CLAIMS EFT 11/16/2023 Run 1-14	\$95,256.24
CLAIMS DIRECT PAY 11/16/2023 Run 1-7	\$6,396.11
PAYROLL E-CHECKS 1531-1539; Dir Deposit Run 11/07/2023	\$71,022.86

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Attest: 

Nickole North, MMC, CPFA
Clerk/Treasurer

By: 

Keith Campbell
Mayor