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CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY  
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Regular Meeting of the City Council  
January 13, 2021– 6:00 P.M. – Via ZOOM

**Call to Order**

Mayor Julia Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Mayor Julia Johnson, Councilmembers: Kevin Loy, Chuck Owen, Brendan McGoffin, Karl de Jong, Glenn Allen, JoEllen Kesti and Brenda Kinzer. Staff: Finance Manager Scott, Recorder Wolf, City Supervisor/Finance Director Merriman, IT Director Chambers, Planning Director Coleman, Public Works Director Freiburger, Fire Chief Klinger, Police Chief Tucker, Police Lt. McIlraith and City Attorney Thompson.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mayor Johnson requested motion to approve the agenda.

Councilmember Kinzer moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Councilmember McGoffin. Motion carried (6-0).

**Consent Calendar**

1. Minutes from Previous Meeting
2. Finance
  - Claim Checks #194356 to #194455 plus EFT's in the amount of \$719,213.92
  - Claim Checks #194456 to #194540 in the amount of \$746,404.06
  - Payroll Checks #60240 to #60250 plus EFT's in the amount of \$314,854.42
  - Payroll Checks #60251 to #60265 plus EFT's in the amount of \$548,166.30
3. Peace Health United General Clinical Contract - Amendment
4. Final Acceptance of the 2020 SR20 West Lane Widening & Safety Improvement Project - Contract No. 2020-PW-01
5. Purchase Order Approval - 2020-PO-28
6. Recommendation from the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee for the 2021 Lodging Tax Grant Program

Councilmember Kinzer moved to approve the consent agenda items 1 thru 6. Councilmember Owen seconded. Motion carried (6-0).

## **Introduction of Special Guests and Presentations**

Mayor Johnson spoke of the honor and privilege of swearing in new officers and asked Lt. McIlraith if he would like to say a few words. Lt. McIlraith spoke of the challenges the new class of officers faced in the midst of the COVID pandemic and the lack of a formal graduation ceremony to be sworn in to service in front of family and friends. He briefly introduced the new officers and listed their graduation dates.

Mayor Johnson swore in the following officers:

- Ruben J. Fortuna
- Keira G. Foster
- Harrison A. McGaughey
- Cody T. Velthuisen
- Deion C. Whitt

Police Chief Tucker spoke after the swearing in regards to the planned increase in police officer staffing due to replacing members leaving the force. Emphasized new crew is full of really good officers and that the council is looking at the future of the police force for Sedro-Woolley.

Presentation by city attorney, Nikki Thompson, regarding a possible future code amendment for a Hearing Examiner Decision Making in Quasi-Judicial Matters for Land Use processes.

There was discussion about how much it would cost the city and whether the council would remain a part of the process. Attorney Thompson stated that there is a trend towards eliminating Council decision making.

It is being recommended to amend the Sedro-Woolley Municipal Code (SWMC 2.90, 2.34) to make the Hearing Examiner the final decision maker in quasi-judicial matters as authorized by State Law with appeal to the Superior Court.

Attorney Thompson clarified that the Council sets the rules and laws that will apply to these applications. Council still determines how they want the city to look and function by implementing those rules and laws. The Hearing Examiner would decide whether Land Use proposals met the requirements and adhered to all ordinances that the Council has in place.

Mayor Johnson clarified with Attorney Thomson that the Hearing Examiner is an expert on the law in regards to land use applications and with the increase in applications to the City of Sedro-Woolley, the Council would essentially need to be as well versed in the laws and regulations as the Hearing Examiner to be able to participate in that decision making, if the Hearing Examiner is not utilized. She advised Council this was just an informative presentation and at a later date, it will be brought before Council for a decision based on the information given.

## **Staff Reports**

Fire Chief Klinger – gave a Covid update noting there are 96 new cases today in Skagit Co. Spoke of Washington's Healthy Roadmap to Recovery and stated that Skagit, Whatcom, Island and San Juan

Counties are judged as a group. As a group, we must hit 4 out of 4 objectives to move to Level 2. With what is going on in Whatcom County, it doesn't appear that will happen soon. Will work with IT Director Chambers to get that info up on the city website.

Councilmember de Jong asked about the vaccine roll-out and if the staff of the Fire Dept are taking them. Chief Klinger advised that out of the 47 members of his department, 20 chose to have the vaccine. 2<sup>nd</sup> dose is scheduled to be on the 27<sup>th</sup>. It was asked if there had been anyone experiencing side effects from the vaccine and Chief Klinger said no. Clarification was made that only 20 employees wanted the vaccine, if more had wanted it, it would have been provided to more staff.

Police Chief Tucker – spoke of an incident where someone was locked in a public restroom and had to call 9-1-1 and the police were able to assist. He also updated on the body-worn cameras, noting that we are the only ones with body-worn cameras. Said the cameras are for both the safety of the officers but also for the accountability and transparency to the people we serve. New system to upgrade the cameras was about \$15,000 but that allows for unlimited storage, tech assistance, upgrades and replacements. Advised Police Dept will be able to start scheduling their COVID vaccinations next week, per the Health Dept. Will have Max and Brady coming out of the Academy soon. Sgt. Jason Harris retired at the end of 2020. Det. Hannawalt is moving to Florida. Will need to replace both of those officers. At the beginning of March, also losing another senior officer to military duty for a year. Result will be that in 2022, there will be 10 or 11 “new” officers that weren't on the force in 2019 or just starting in 2020.

Planning Director Coleman – Planning commission will start to review the regulations for the electronic reader boards in the central business district in the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Also in that meeting, they will begin work on a State required periodic review of the shoreline management program. Mostly applies to the city park since it is in the flood plain. This is required by the Dept of Ecology. Also received this week the formal annexation petition for the annexation just south of Bassett Road, towards the northern part of the city. City Council has already reviewed and approved for the applicants to submit formal petition.

Public Works Director Freiburger – has four projects under design right now: 1. Resignalization project at Hwy 20 and Hwy9/Township. That is getting close to final design and hope to have out to bid in next couple of months. 2. Electrical upgrade project at the water treatment plant is finishing submittals and should be ready to start construction in March. 3. Working with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad to build a rail crossing to support the Jonestown Liner Trail project. Have had a major breakthrough with them and we have an agreement being reviewed by them and have another meeting on Friday and they have started on the design of the undercrossing itself. Should be complete by June 2021. Will talk a little later about last project.

Councilmember de Jong made a comment that neighbors have approached him in regards to the intersection of Township and Jameson, stating that many drivers don't stop at the stop sign and they were wondering if there was something that could be done with enforcement patrols or make the stop sign a little more visible, proposing flashing lights.

IT Director Chambers – calling from the road. Glen is working a lot with the police and fire vehicles for new hires and new vehicles. Assisting with the WIMS software install out at the wastewater treatment plant and will be assisting with the financial web-based software upgrade.









