
City of Falls City
City Council Meeting Minutes
Monday May 10, 2021, 6:00 PM
COVID-19 Related Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98656766387?pwd=bEVRRjBwbnlJWVdhOXPtTDZpVG9Wdz09>
Call in #1-253-215-8782, Meeting ID: 986 5676 6387 Passcode: 585730

Council Present: Lori Jean Sickles, Tony Meier, Amy Houghtaling, T.J. Bailey

Staff Present: AJ Foscoli, City Manager; Jamie Ward, City Recorder

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Gordon called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Clerk Ward took roll call. Dennis Sickles arrived at 6:02 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Gordon led the pledge.

3. Motion to adopt the entire Agenda

A motion was made by Councilor T. Meier and seconded by Councilor T. Bailey to adopt the entire agenda. Motion carried 5-0-0-1. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Tony Meier, Amy Houghtaling, Dennis Sickles, T.J. Bailey.

4. Announcements

A motion was made by Councilor A. Houghtaling and seconded by Councilor L. Sickles to appoint Charlie Flynn, Art Houghtaling, Jason Evens to serve as members of the Budget Committee. Motion carried 4-0-1-1. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Tony Meier, Dennis Sickles, T.J. Bailey. Abstain: Amy Houghtaling,

5. Community & Government Organizations

a. Public Works Report
None

b. Fire Report

Sharon Volk Greve reported that the Falls City Volunteer Fire Department is preparing fire season and has already had five (5) grass fires in the month of April. Luckily, they were small and easy to extinguish. There were seven (7) medical calls and three (3) vehicle accidents. Two (2) volunteers are now certified EMTs on the department.

c. Sheriff Report
None

6. Reports

a. Mayor Gordon went over his Mayors report (see exhibit A) but wanted to give a big shout out to Jon and Donna Creekmore, Amy and Art Houghtaling, the full school board, and public works committee members, Guy Mack and Jeff Propp, for providing written testimony to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means in support of American Rescue Plan appropriations for the city of Falls City Wastewater Project.

Mayor Gordon went on to read that given the misinformation about this project expressed on social media during the election season, and in response to a recent letter shared in the council packet by a resident who questioned the very existence of the project, I would like to propose the following constituency outreach measures:

- Beginning in June, I will hold constituent “office hours” every Friday from 9am – 12pm for citizens to drop by City Hall and ask any questions about matters that are before the Council. If there are no objections, it might be a good idea to include “mayor office hours” in the city newsletter. As always, my email and phone number are posted on the City website and folks are free to make appointments or give me a call/email and often do so.
- I’d like to ask a City Councilor to volunteer to gather sewer or water project websites that other cities have created. I will then use those samples to draft an appropriate webpage for the Falls City sewer project and present to Council/staff/funding partners/engineer for approval.
- I’d like to ask for Council’s blessing to draft a brief sewer update from the full City Council to include in an upcoming newsletter. Given that this project has been unanimously placed as the #1 Council Goal for several years and given that we discuss details of the project in virtually every Council meeting, we should be able to come to a consensus on appropriate messaging that clearly reflects the project’s status.

Mayor Gordon paused after the constituency outreach measures to ask council for ideas or comments.

Councilor A. Houghtaling asked if he was wanting links for the website suggestions? She also stated that holding meetings on every Friday was a big commitment and recommended he tailor that down to every other week.

Councilor T. Bailey wanted to echo what Councilor A. Houghtaling was suggesting about overextending and also stated that the website idea was a fantastic idea as well as the sewer update for an upcoming newsletter.

- b. Councilor T. Bailey wanted to update council that he submitted the Kubota grant for the Hometown Pride to assist with the skate park.

Councilor J. Drill wanted to bring up that the property next to where the proposed lagoon site is available for sale again and feels that it could be in our best interest to investigate purchasing that property.

Mayor Gordon thinks that would be a good idea to have staff reach out to city engineers to investigate the feasibility of owning that land.

City Manager Foscoli agrees that it could help “future proof” the wastewater project. He stated he will reach out to the engineer.

- c. City Manager Foscoli read his staff report (see exhibit B).

7. Consent Agenda

A motion made by Councilor A. Houghtaling and Seconded by Councilor T. Meier that the City Council of the City of Falls City accept the consent agenda approval of the Bills. Motion carried 6-0-0-0. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill, Tony Meier, Amy Houghtaling, Dennis Sickles, TJ Bailey. Nays:

8. Public Comments

None

9. New Business

a. Supplemental Budget Two (2)

A motion made by Councilor A. Houghtaling and Seconded by Councilor T. Bailey that the City Council of the City of Falls City adopt RESOLUTION 05-2021 FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET 2. Motion carried 6-0-0-0. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill, Tony Meier, Amy Houghtaling, Dennis Sickles, TJ Bailey. Nays:

b. Step by Step Horse therapy Business License Application

A motion made by Councilor T. Bailey and Seconded by Councilor L. Sickles that the City Council of the City of Falls City approve the Business License for Step by Step Horse therapy. Motion carried 6-0-0-0. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill, Tony Meier, Amy Houghtaling, Dennis Sickles, TJ Bailey. Nays:

c. 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Audit was approved and submitted. Mayor Gordon stated it will be posted on the website.

City Manager Foscoli brought to councils' attention that the auditors had a few questions regarding the shared services fund, and we will most likely be moving away from that fund in Fiscal Year 2021-2022

d. Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments amendment to the agreement. A revised contract to split the costs of the current contract in two installments of \$10,000 to the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments CDBG administration contract for the ongoing effort to support the Community Development Block Grant work (Environmental Review Record).

A motion made by Councilor D. Sickles and Seconded by Councilor T. Bailey that the City Council of the City of Falls City to direct the mayor to sign the update contract between the city of Falls City and the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG, or COG). Motion carried 6-0-0-0. Ayes: Lori Jean Sickles, Jennifer Drill, Tony Meier, Amy Houghtaling, Dennis Sickles, TJ Bailey. Nays:

10. Old Business

None

11. Good of the Order

Some concerns for the concerts that are being promoted for S. Main St. those complaints can be forwarded to the City Manager.

Councilor A. Houghtaling asked what the city needed help with the Spring Clean?

City Recorder, Jamie Ward stated the city needed volunteers desperately.

12. Adjourn

No motion made.

The meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Attested:  _____ Mayor, ~~Jeremy Gordon~~ TJ Bailey
 _____ City Recorder, Jamie Ward



City of Falls City
 299 Mill Street
 Falls City, OR 97344
 Ph 503.787.3631

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
 JEREMY GORDON

Mayor's Report, May 10, 2022

Falls City Wastewater Project and ARPA Funding Advocacy

Please join me in thanking Jon and Donna Creekmore, Amy and Art Houghtaling, the full School Board, and public works committee members, Guy Mack and Jeff Propp, for providing written testimony to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means in support of American Rescue Plan appropriations for the Falls City Wastewater Project. I provided live testimony to the full Joint Committee on Saturday, April 24th and stressed the need for additional, non-grant funding to help keep sewer rates reasonable for our sewer users. I was pleased that the chair selected me to speak as there were hundreds of folks in the queue waiting to provide testimony. I also submitted written testimony by pulling citizen statements drawn from the community-wide survey the City conducted in 2019, which included many unprompted statements of support for the sewer project, and none against. State Representative, David Gomberg, submitted materials in support of our project, and I believe the project is included on the Regional Solutions list. As expected, the total ask of the Oregon legislature far exceeds the total federal dollars appropriated for capital projects in Oregon. Though it is highly unlikely that my full ask of \$800k will be appropriated, let us all hope that at least some of the funds are appropriated, which are literally intended for projects like these in low-moderate income rural communities.

Given the misinformation about this project expressed on social media during the election season, and in response to a recent letter shared in the council packet by a resident who questioned the very existence of the project, I'd like to propose the following constituency outreach measures:

- Beginning in June, I will hold constituent "office hours" every Friday from 9am – 12pm for citizens to drop by City Hall and ask any questions about matters that are before the Council. If there are no objections, it might be a good idea to include "mayor office hours" in the city newsletter. As always, my email and phone number are posted on the City website and folks are free to make appointments or give me a call/email and often do so.
- I'd like to ask a City Councilor to volunteer to gather sewer or water project websites that other cities have created. I will then use those samples to draft an appropriate webpage for the Falls City sewer project and present to Council/staff/funding partners/engineer for approval.
- I'd like to ask for Council's blessing to draft a brief sewer update from the full City Council to include in an upcoming newsletter. Given that this project has been unanimously placed as the #1 Council Goal for several years, and given that we discuss details of the project in virtually every Council meeting, we should be able to come to a consensus on appropriate messaging that clearly reflects the project's status.

Community Center Volunteer Cleaning Schedule

Due to periodic issues with the cleanliness of the Community Center common areas, I would like to propose a few solutions that can help keep the space clean, integrate our efforts better with the Fire Department, and ensure we are equipped for COVID-19 related safety issues and compliance.

- Use of some remaining CARE Act funds for the purchase of cleaning and disinfecting supplies. John Gilbert, Fire Association President/FSCD Facilities Manager provided a list of supplies and equipment that will help both the Fire Dept. and other volunteers. Manager Foscoli is on board with this plan.
- I'd like to ask willing councilors and committee members to participate in a monthly cleaning schedule. I will work with John to create a manageable checklist of tasks.

Fire Department Discussions

- Councilor Foscoli, Chief Young, and Association President Gilbert met recently to discuss fire budget issues, fire levy renewal timeline/options, and potential consolidation discussions. We had a productive discussion about conditions for partnerships and some of the difficulties with past negotiations with SW Polk. During a recent visit to the Polk County BOC, Commissioner Pope and I discussed his involvement as a regional convener to discuss possible consolidation scenarios in the County. Manager Foscoli, Commissioner Pope, Chief Young, and I are meeting on May 14th to discuss Falls City's positions and potential involvement with these efforts. We are all committed to ensuring quality public safety services at optimal cost for citizens. And it is in Falls City's best interest to participate in these discussions in advance of any Council/citizen decisions.

City Council Email Standards

"No quorum of a governing body shall meet in private for the purpose of deciding on or deliberating toward a decision on any matter except as otherwise provided by ORS 192.610 to 192.690." As we were trained recently, and as has been communicated many times in the past, it is a possible violation of public meetings laws to discuss by email with a quorum of the Council, any matters that might require deliberation toward a decision outside public meetings, including interpretation of public meeting requirements. I appreciate that Council raised this issue during our previous meeting and identified two violations. There was some 'damage control' responses that should also wait until a public meeting. Let's agree to keep any discussions about any future violations confined to the state statute and address in a public meeting.

Good of the Order (quoted from Robert's Rules, 11th Edition, FYI)

"This heading refers to the *general welfare of the organization* (emphasis mine) and may vary in character. Under this heading (in contrast to the general parliamentary rule that allows discussion only with reference to a pending motion), members who obtain the floor commonly are permitted to offer informal observations regarding the work of the organization, the public reputation of the society [City Council], or its membership [individual public officials] or the like."

Thanks to all of you for your continued service. It is my privilege work with all of you for the betterment of Falls City.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Gordon, Mayor



City of Falls City
299 Mill Street
Falls City, OR 97344
Ph 503.787.3631

City Manager's Report May 10, 2021

Introduction

Since our last meeting, our community started enjoying some freedom of movement as the Governor's restrictions for Polk County were eased, and then unfortunately, those restrictions came back to tamp down the growing enthusiasm. We have adapted to these dynamic conditions and have found that the community is following suit. Our foyer has been open for some time and it has helped our customer service improve during these COVID-influenced times. We're hoping that as Falls City has supported its citizens in vaccinating, enough others around the county will do so as well, to allow us to have a summer better than the last.

Wastewater Project – I have been continuing to attend the regular meetings with the multi-organizational team putting together the ultimate application for financing through USDA-RD. As specified in previous city manager's reports, we're still working through the logistics of securing a grant award to cover the costs of the Cultural Resource Survey. As previously stated, the extension of our deadline and modification of the contract for completion of work under the CDBG Grant with the State of Oregon is allowing us more time to cover the cost of the Biological Assessment required by USDA. In order to pay for this administrative requirement, the state's DEQ representative is coordinating with the Army Corps of Engineers in order to identify whether this falls under a programmatic agreement between federal agencies. We will know the outcome of this effort to mitigate upfront costs in the next few weeks. In order to cover all of the additional prerequisite assessments to qualify for USDA funding, we have submitted an additional CDBG grant, as well as a DEQ interim loan request that will then be rolled into the USDA construction funding.

IT Project – The work to ensure that council chambers have the ability to livestream council meetings using laptops, microphones and YouTube is complete. The video-camera/microphone set up will be operational for the May meetings, though we are still taking precautionary measures regarding in person meetings. According to the Governor's restrictions for Polk County, we will be returning to the High Risk category, meaning virtual meeting protocols will be in place, with the possibility of indoor participation with social distancing.

Note: If you have questions/concerns, please respond to me individually by email, phone, or in person. This way we avoid violating any public meetings laws with a "reply all" response, or multiple councilors discussing on the same thread.

Doctor's Office Renovation – The promotion of the Luckiamute Clinic building space for occupancy by local businesses, non-profits and public partners has been very successful. The RFI (Request for Information) from potential tenants received interest from 9 parties. The next steps are to enter into short-medium term agreements with those tenants able to occupy sections on the building in the coming months. As for the facility itself, we outfitted it with Wi-Fi for future tenants and are holding off on adding heating upgrades until the next fiscal year.

Vaccination Event – Salem Health, with its mobile vaccination unit, held a vaccination event at our Community Center and 150 people received the 1-shot Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. Though in the following week, the CDC (Center for Disease Control) & FDA (Food & Drug Administration) paused the use of that particular vaccine due to an overabundance of caution from 6 extremely rare cases of blood clotting in vaccine recipients, the pause has since been lifted. The more than 6.8 million doses administered with few to no adverse effects, have been pointed to as clear indication that the vaccination efforts to help the country get back to normal are proceeding successfully.

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Commission & Committee Engagement– The city’s various commissions and committees in 2020 have had their regular function disrupted by social distancing rules, as well as turnover in membership. At present, the committees with the biggest need for participation are:

- Historic Landmark Commission
- Parks & Recreation Committee
- Budget Review Committee

I’d like to encourage councilmembers to help enlist interested citizens to submit applications for membership.

Workplace Violence – Due to a recent instance of verbal abuse by a member of our team toward another member, it has been my sad duty to have had to spend valuable time thoroughly familiarizing myself with our personnel policies regarding workplace violence, instead of focusing on helping Falls City. Since each team member deserves to be in a work environment that is devoid of intimidation, harassment and bullying, it is my sincere intention to ensure that such blatant breach of protocol within our staff is never repeated. If after an investigation of the incident, violations of workplace rules have taken place, the offending team member will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.

Vaccination Event – Thanks to an amazing collaborative effort initiated by Salem Health, and facilitated by our Mayor Gordon, our community was able to vaccinate over 150 people on April 9th. We, as a small community, owe a great debt of gratitude to all of the professional staff of Salem Health who administered the vaccines, as well as the many volunteers who helped make this event a success. We look forward to being able to host another similar event in the future.

Sincerely,



AJ Foscoli

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