

**CITY OF KALAMA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2, 2009**

1. OPENING

Mayor Pete Poulsen opened the City Council meeting at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Poulsen led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmembers present were Adam Smee, Dominic Ciancibelli, Chuck Hutchinson, Don Purvis, and Bud Gish. City staff present were Director of Public Works Carl McCrary, Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster, and Police Chief Bruce Hall. City Attorney Paul Brachvogel was also present. Members of the public present are listed on the sign-in sheet.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA - None

4. PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS

A. Twenty -year Award - Dan Aumiller - Public Works

Mayor Poulsen and Director of Public Works Carl McCrary presented Public Works crew member Danny Aumiller with a plaque in appreciation for his twenty years of service to the City. Mr. Aumiller thanked the City and his family for the support over the years.

B. Proclamation - Constitution Week September 17 - 23, 2009

Mayor Poulsen read the proclamation declaring the week of September 17 -23, 2009 as Constitution Week.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. City Mural at the Elm Street Underpass

Mayor Poulsen opened the public hearing on the City Mural to be completed at the Elm Street underpass, noting the work already done looks good. He complimented the scouts and their parents for all the good work they do within the community. Director of Public Works Carl McCrary introduced McKay Graff the Eagle Scout candidate who is leading the project. Mr. Graff noted this has been a fun project. The mural will depict the river history of Kalama from the Indians up to the current river traffic. They will be working on the trees and hillside backgrounds over the weekend and welcomed all to come and help. It was explained that professional artists will be guiding the project and citizens will be able to fill in the body. It needs to be completed before the fall and winter weather come in. There was an offer from a younger scout troupe to help. Mr. McCrary noted that there are traffic safety concerns with having youngsters working in the area. He would not recommend having those younger than 12 on the

site. There was clarification that the incorporation date should be 1871 on the banner. Comments from the audience were all positive. Local company Absolute Concrete is donating some of the paint and overcoat. The final work will be done on the weekend of September 12th so everyone was invited to bring brushes to help. Mr. McCrary noted that he had met with a representative of the Cowlitz Tribe and they are very positive about being represented on the mural.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS - None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Meeker Drive Sewer Lift Station Repair Project

Mayor Poulsen informed the Council that after the last meeting and the discussion regarding the overruns he had been provided with some added information he felt the Council should know prior to following up on the Council's request to contact Cowlitz PUD. Mr. Chet Wornick of Nelson Electric, Inc. provided an overview of the project and the problems that led to the changes and the increase in costs. There was some involvement with the PUD and also with the inspections from Labor and Industries that created the problems. The issue was all related to how to connect the lift station directly to the power supply. The old connection was found to be not usable, and an alternative had to be found. Since the power at the lift station could only be off for a short period, a temporary connection had to be put in place while the alternative was figured out. An additional switch box with signage was required by the inspectors. Each change increased the cost. There was also a confined space issue addressed by the inspectors. Normally when Nelson Electric does work with the City it doesn't exceed the estimated costs. Mr. Wornick expressed his appreciation for all the work the City does provide them.

Mayor Poulsen asked if the Council still wanted to pursue to challenge the actions of the PUD and try to recover some of the cost overruns. After much discussion, the Council requested that Mayor Poulsen, with Director of Public Works Carl McCrary's help, draft a letter to the PUD Commissioners expressing their concern and dissatisfaction with how this project was handled on their end. Due to the differing information at different levels within the PUD organization it cost the City money which during these lean times was not helpful. The Council will review the letter and all will sign it before it is sent out. It is hoped that by letting the Commissioners know of the issues, it will help to improve service in the future.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Budget 2010 - Council Direction

Mayor Poulsen voiced his concern with the upcoming ballot initiative 1033 which will limit general revenues of the City. This could reduce City revenues even further than they have been by the recession. Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster requested the Council provide the staff with some input on how they would like to see projections for 2010 be made. She also informed them that the recent

reductions in the property tax valuations will not greatly affect the City which should be able to collect their full 1 percent increase on property taxes. Ms. McMaster then explained some of the possible ramifications of initiative 1033. 1033 limits the general revenue growth to the percentage of increase to population plus the percentage of inflation over the previous year's revenue level. Anything over that will then be used in the next year to reduce the property tax levy. Using a spreadsheet provided by the Association of Washington Cities, it appears the City could lose over \$200,000 in revenues over the next five years. The spreadsheet is based on estimates for growth which are not exact, but based upon the past ten years of history and patterns, plus the fact that the City has several developments waiting to move forward when the economy improves. Included in the revenues are fees for building permits and court fines plus the tax revenues including sales taxes. For 2009 the City has received very limited building fees and sales taxes are down 12% down, so this already puts the revenues down. The cap under 1033 prevent any funds being available for reserves or to cover inflationary increases. Ms. McMaster informed the Council that more information is available from a link on the Municipal Research website. This is going to be a big factor in budget decisions if it passes in November. There is a vote no group listed on the links. Mayor Poulsen asked the Council if they wanted to consider doing a proclamation against the initiative.

When asked what the Council wanted to do for next year, they felt that the City has to look at replacing some of the cuts made in 2009.

Police Chief Bruce Hall commented that he finds the budget process very loose and would like an opportunity to make a presentation to the City Council on the needs of his department for the future. He doesn't feel the Council does any long range planning. There was discussion of setting the first budget workshop. Kalama citizen Jim Dickey noted that more of the public needs to get involved so that they can be informed of the ramifications of the initiative 1033 and other needs of the City.

B. Used Patrol Vehicle Purchase

Police Chief Bruce Hall explained his dilemma regarding his current police vehicles. Two of the vehicles have mechanical problems, which has one completely out of service and the other only available for limited service. This leaves only one vehicle to be shared by three alternating officers. This means of 168 hours in a week, the car is being run 132. The other two vehicles are designated for Sergeant Parker and the dog and the Chief's vehicle. Sgt. Parker's car has high mileage and burns oil. The Mayor had suggested the Chief give up his vehicle but that would leave him unavailable to respond to calls effectively. With only the one vehicle, an officer coming on shift can be left without a vehicle to respond to calls should the on shift officer be on a call. Chief Hall provided nine different options for repairing or replacing one of the two vehicles. The best option, number 6, would be to purchase a used Expedition with only 65,000 miles that is already a fully-equipped police vehicle. He stated that if the City waits until all things are in order with the economy, then the cars will never be

replaced. It isn't a perfect world. His officers need the proper equipment to respond to calls. There was money included in the budget and in reserve originally, but this was cut and used for car payments due to the revenue shortfalls. He has deferred maintenance on the vehicles due to shortfalls as well. He has found financing for the vehicle for over 5 years at 6% interest with no money down. The payments will be just over \$300 per month. The total cost of the vehicle would be around \$19,000. Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster cautioned the Council that once the loan is in place the City will be obligated should the revenues become tighter. All options should be addressed, including cutting other expenses, such as reducing fuel costs by using the mid-grade instead of premium fuel. It might be better to put this on hold until after the election. Chief Hall stated he would try the change in fuel for a month to see what it might save and if the cars would run efficiently. There was discussion about what could be recovered by disposing of the old vehicles, but Chief Hall felt it would be minimal as all the equipment has to be removed which is costly. The use of drug money was also suggested. It was agreed that number 6 is the best option, but the timing of the request is bad. Mayor Poulsen asked if the Council wanted to make a decision tonight or put this on hold. Putting it on hold could mean the City could lose its option on the vehicle being considered. Councilmember Don Purvis stated he would like some additional time to consider the options. *Councilmember Chuck Hutchinson made a motion the City exercise option 6 and authorize the Chief to move forward to purchase the vehicle. Councilmember Adam Smee seconded. Councilmember Dominic Ciancibelli suggested the motion be amended to include the Chief attempt to negotiate the price down for the purchase if possible. Councilmember Hutchinson amended his motion accordingly. Councilmember Smee seconded the amended motion.* There was some further discussion on the timing of the transaction and how long the vehicle might last. It was hoped it would be good for at least five years. The need is now and whether there will be a better time can not be known. The motion passed with a vote of 4 to 1 with Councilmember Purvis voting against.

9. ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS - None

10. CORRESPONDENCE - None

11. MAYOR'S REPORT & COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS

A. Mayor Pete Poulsen made a suggestion that the City might want to consider changing the speed limit downtown. He has found that people don't stop at the crosswalks very well. Director of Public Works Carl McCrary noted there are some legal issues that would need to be addressed, but he would discuss it further with the Mayor.

- B.** Councilmember Adam Smee had no report.
- C.** Councilmember Dominic Ciancibelli had no report.
- D.** Councilmember Chuck Hutchinson had no report.

E. Councilmember Donald Purvis informed the Council the next Government Summit will be on September 23, 2009 at the Expo Center in Longview.

F. Councilmember Bud Gish had no report.

12. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Director of Public Works Carl McCrary noted his public works report was completed but missing from the packets. He stated he was glad that the City had decided while the money is tight, to paint the crosswalks was a priority. Just this afternoon, a child was hit up near the school. It appears the injury is a broken arm that will require surgery. There was some discussion of the accident, but it still being investigated. Chief Hall noted that if they wanted to set up some kind of a sting to get people for not honoring the crosswalks he would need some volunteers. Mr. McCrary provided some photos of the structure built by the crew at the Wastewater plant to keep the heat off of some of the equipment. This equipment had been overheating and causing issues with the plant operations. The crew has been extremely busy with many items. He added that under the new permit the state may be requiring a new test that will cost the City over \$8000 to do. He and the plant operator are trying to find a way to not have it imposed on Kalama.

Mr. McCrary also noted that the pre-construction meeting will be held at City Hall tomorrow morning at 10:30 am for the downtown project. They are hoping to start next week.

B. Police Chief Bruce Hall provided a statistical report. The department is now tracking outside agency assists to each agency. He noted that over the last five years the number of accidents the department has handled has dropped dramatically by over a hundred percent. This is due to the officers being more visible and patrolling.

C. Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster reported that the AWC will be holding a regional meeting in October in Woodland where concerns of all cities can be discussed.

Mayor Poulsen asked the Council when they would like to set a budget workshop. Councilmember Bud Gish noted that while the workshops are not enjoyable, they are necessary. They need to be longer than an hour so should be on the off Wednesday when possible. After much deliberation the workshop was set for Monday, September 21, 2009 at 6 pm. The department heads will be asked to make presentations of their needs for 2010.

D. City Attorney Paul Brachvogel had no report.

13. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Bud Gish made a motion the City Council approve the Consent Agenda including Claims Vouchers Totaling \$79,945.62, Payroll Vouchers totaling \$111,676.85 and the City Council minutes of August 19,2009. Councilmember Don Purvis seconded, and the motion carried.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

15. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Poulsen adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m. These minutes are not verbatim. A copy of the tape can be made available for listening.

Pete Poulsen - Mayor

Coni McMaster - Clerk/Treasurer