



CITY OF HOQUIAM

City Council Meeting Minutes

JAN 24, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Winkelman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and Councilmember Puvogel led the flag salute.

SWEARING IN OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Mayor Winkelman issued the oath of office to Councilmembers Anderson and Brooks

ROLL CALL

Those in attendance at the meeting were Mayor Winkelman and Councilmembers Anderson, Brand, Brooks, Carlstrom, Dick, George, Hinchey, McMillan, Nelson, Pellegrini, and Puvogel. Councilmember Reid entered the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Staff in attendance were Police Chief Jeff Myers, Asst. Fire Chief Matt Miller, City Attorney Steve Johnson, City Administrator Brian Shay, Finance Director Corri Schmid and Council Secretary Tracy Wood.

PUBLIC HEARING

Water System Plan and Water Use Efficiency Goals

Councilmember McMillan moved to open the public hearing at 7:06 p.m. The motion was seconded and passed by voice vote. Mr. Shay introduced David Kunz from HDR Engineering who provided background information regarding the Water System Plan and the Water Use Efficiency Goals. The Water System Plan is updated every 6 years, but will now be on a 10-year cycle. The updates have now been completed for the plan and it is being reviewed by City of Aberdeen, DOH and Grays Harbor County, as well as the public. Mr. Kunz reviewed what was looked at to update the plan. They reviewed needed improvements and priorities for needed repairs to the pipelines with other needed retrofits to the reservoirs. He also spoke about the goals for the future and how to decrease the water loss that the city has been experiencing. It is felt the loss is due to the aging infrastructure and can be corrected once needed repairs are made. Councilmember George stated he is very pleased that gallons per day metered is being used. He asked to have that on the water bills so consumers will understand how much they are paying "per gallon". Mayor Winkelman asked when we shut down some of the older pipelines; Mr. Kunz stated that the data was pulled right before those shutdowns so the distribution leakage has probably



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COMMUNICATIONS

Harbor Regional Health

gone done due to those closing. Councilmember Pellegrini moved to close the public hearing at 7:35 p.m. and his motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

In attendance at the meeting were Tom Jensen, Michael Bruce, Andy Bickar, David Quigg, Scott Dilley, Dr. Anne Marie Wong, Elizabeth Chimperie, Chris Majors and Dr. Buck, representing Harbor Regional Health. Council had requested at a previous meeting for representatives from the hospital to speak on the diversion problems at the hospital and other issues they have been experiencing. Councilmember George stated that there is a concern that our ambulance service is no longer sure of delivering patients to this emergency room and sometimes need to go an hour or more away to hospitals that will accept them. This does not sound like a very good situation and it puts our citizens travelling to who knows where. He was told the primary problem was lack of nursing staff. Mr. Jensen stated that COVID has had a huge impact on nursing staff not just on the Harbor but all the way across the United States. There are over 6100 jobs in the state of Washington for nurses that are not filled. Unfortunately, for us when we are the hospital at the end of the road, it really affects us. The hospital has definitely seen every job description harder and harder to fill. The State Legislation is now looking at implementing nurse-staffing ratios – hospitals can only take so many patients based on number of nurses they have. Some of the diverts are based on staffing and some are based on other issues such as equipment failures or equipment maintenance.

Councilmember George suggested that the hospital speak with the Grays Harbor Community Foundation to establish a program for loans and scholarships to go into the nursing program at Grays Harbor College. There are answers – turn some of the Harbor's unemployed people into much needed staff.

Councilmember Puvogel stated that there are problems in healthcare at large – not just Grays Harbor. In August of this past year the NY Times put up a map with the Covid and variants; compared July 1st to August 1st – we were in trouble before anyone



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else was. This has been an issue for some time. Even when it was a private hospital, there were issues with serving patients. Curious about what we can do in the Harbor since we are so far behind everyone else. Mr. Jensen answered that some of the things the Hospital has been working on is primary care; keeping people healthy – we are making investments in that. He again spoke regarding HB 1868 and Senate Bill 5751, which will mandate the number of patients that can be helped. If those bills make it through the legislature – it will be a problem for this hospital.

Commissioner Quigg spoke of the importance of keeping the growth going, we who live here know Hoquiam is a great place but people coming here to look into jobs do not know that. There is a program in effect for Seniors in high school to go into healthcare programs at the college. The Commissioners and hospital hear you; he encouraged anyone to call when you have questions.

Mayor Winkelman stated that the constituents in Hoquiam are asking their elected officials why our ambulances end up in Tacoma, which requires us to call in extra staff with added costs and puts our citizens at risk. We need to understand how to answer these questions. Councilmember McMillan asked Mr. Jensen how often maintenance on the equipment is causing ambulances to divert. Mr. Jensen said it depends on the equipment; it could be once a month or once a quarter. Those diversions are only for that specific type of patient who would need that equipment. It has really been about staffing over the past 6 to 9 months. This divert program is not just a problem in Grays Harbor. Councilmember Brooks stated that as a professional in the healthcare field, many of his patients say that they will go to Summit before they come to this hospital. Why are our constituents leaving town to get care? It is disturbing to him that patients being sent there for psychiatric or mental health evaluations are being sent home. Dr. Buck stated that the divert crisis came to a head in about May or June. The Hospital EMS Trauma Care councils have been meetings since August almost weekly; the critical are not diverted, those with airway problems, etc., are not diverted. This is not just a nursing shortage; it is also an EMS, Dr., and other healthcare worker shortage. We need some support for a paramedic program at our college.



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Councilmember Hinchon stated that a few years ago Mr. Jensen and others came to a Council meeting and talked about citizens using these facilities to keep the hospital open; the wait times are ridiculous; you can wait all day or all night. The staff is unfriendly; he experienced these problems personally. He was finally put in a room and then sat there for 4 hours with no one even talking to him. When he went to talk to someone, he was treated very rudely; what are you doing about these issues. Mr. Jensen said they are working on customer service as we speak; the hospital has ran through more department heads in that department than any other. Management does hear what you are saying and apologize. Commissioner Quigg said that the most critical patients would be seen first. You will wait if there are more severe cases in front of you. We are working on this – when you feel sick it is horrible and when you feel you are being treated rudely, it is worse. Councilmember Anderson stated that she has a hard time with Mr. Jensen advocating against something that would improve worker safety and patient care. The staffing issue is all over the place. Councilmember Puvogel stated that no one wants this hospital not to succeed; the frustration is that we see it not happening.

Chief Myers said he appreciates the hospital being here, but he finds it frustrating to hear excuses. It is currently an unacceptable level of service for citizens in our community. If he has shortages at the jail – they do not divert. Last year the hospital diverted 251 times. This is unacceptable. Full diverts, psychiatric diverts. It is not acceptable when your Dr. tells our Behavioral Health Navigator that they do not have to put up with a person's behavior when that person is in crisis. We have had this discussion many times with the hospital. Your long-term staff have left up there due to the environment they have been subjected to. He has the upmost respect for those who have stayed. There is some sort of disconnect between administration and the staff. The travelling nurses and Doctors do not provide the same service to those seeking care. What is the plan to fix the Emergency Room services? He believes the hospital can do better, this community deserves to receive service as they have in the past.



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CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Shay stated that it is the hospitals responsibility to treat a patient if our crew takes someone there. The way he understands the rule is that you cannot divert us. Dr. Buck said they must be given a screening exam. If they have a medical condition, they must be stabilized; if there is nothing seriously wrong, they can be sent elsewhere.

Mayor Winkelman thanked the Hospital representatives for attending and answering the questions that were posed to them.

Councilmember McMillan moved for approval of items a and b be approved as presented and his motion was seconded. Those items appearing on the consent agenda were as follows:

- The City Council Minutes of January 10, 2022;
- The Regulatory Committee Report recommending approval and payment of claim check numbers 97593 through 97907 in the amount of \$1,470,905.71; claim auto pays and EFT numbers 0 and 502 through 509 in the amount of \$160,316.30; payroll check numbers 30052 through 30075 in the amount of \$184,208.96; claim ACH and EFT's in the amount of \$423,534.41 and \$213,742.05 respectively; and that payroll and benefits for the month of January 2022 be approved and issued at the proper time.

The motion to approve the consent agenda, items a and b, passed by voice vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee on Committee's
– Council Committee
Assignments

The Committee on Committee's, consisting of Councilmembers McMillan, Puvogel and Nelson, made the following Council appointments for the 2022 Council Committees:

- Watershed Committee: Councilmembers Dick (Chair), Anderson, George, Nelson and Brand;
- Public Utilities Committee: Councilmembers Pellegrini, Dick, Hinchon, Carlstrom and Brand (Chair).
- Regulatory Committee: Councilmembers Carlstrom (Chair), Puvogel, Reid, Pellegrini, and Brooks.



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OFFICER REPORTS

Timber Sale Survey

- Public Safety Committee: Councilmembers McMillan (Chair), Hinchin, Brooks, Reid, Nelson and Puvogel.

Councilmember McMillan moved to pass the Committee on Committee's report and his motion was seconded. City Attorney Johnson stated that with 6 appointments to the Public Safety Committee, this will leave no room for anyone else to attend as that would constitute a quorum. Council understands that and as President of the council, Councilmember McMillan would leave the meeting.

The motion for approval of the Committee assignments passed by voice vote.

Tree Planting Bid

Mr. Shay reported that the city has three separate timber sales planned for 2022. Two of the sales border land owned by Grays Harbor County, one near the old landfill and the other near Failor Lake. The City Forester, Loren Hiner obtained a proposal from Schinnel Surveying and Mapping to mark the property boundaries and record a formal property survey on behalf of the City and County. The proposal totals \$20,800 with the City responsible for \$12,688 as the City owns more land within the survey area. Staff recommends that Council authorize hiring Schinnel Surveying and Mapping for the land surveying for the timber sale projects. Councilmember McMillan moved to authorize the contract with Schinnel Surveying and Mapping and his motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

The City made a formal call for bids to replant approximately 52,200 seedlings across 174 acres of harvested timberlands. Two bids were received as follows: Ramirez Reforestation Inc. in the amount of \$20,874.60 and Four Seasons Forestry Services, Inc. in the amount of \$17,514.00; staff recommends that the council award the contract to Four Seasons Forestry Services Inc. as the apparent low bidder. Councilmember McMillan moved to award the contract to Four Seasons Forestry Services Inc. and his motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.



MAYOR REPORTS

Recent Emergency Events

Mayor Winkelman thanked all of the employees who participated during the tsunami advisory. When the alert was issued, staff and administration were organized in a matter of minutes. He also thanked Mayor Pete Shave and Mayor Sorenson of Elma, who offered resources if necessary. He is confident that our practice is paying off!

Appointments to UFB and HPC

Mayor Winkelman reappointed Dave Ward to the Historic Preservation Commission and Barb George and Kurt Estes to the Urban Forestry Board.

Mayor Appointments

Mayor Winkelman made the following Council appointments:

- Library Board: Councilmember Al Dick and Councilmember Reid;
- 911 Board: Councilmember Brooks;
- Cemetery Board: Councilmember McMillan;
- HBA: Councilmember Carlstrom;
- Tourism: Councilmember Brooks;
- Loggers' Playday Board: Councilmember Anderson;

School Celebration

The Hoquiam High School had scheduled a celebration for Wednesday, January 26th, in honor of Title 9 Women Athletes. This meeting has been moved to February 4th; and they are inviting Hoquiam Women Athletes to come to that Basketball Game where they will be recognized.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Police and Fire Yearend Reports

Councilmember McMillan recognized the police and fire departments for their great work on their annual reports.

911 Board

Councilmember McMillan asked Mayor Winkelman if he should still attend the 911 Board meeting which is scheduled for tomorrow, January 25th. Mr. Brooks could start his term at the meeting scheduled in March. He stated that 911 is looking into



LEGAL BUSINESS

Other Legal

MOU – Hoquiam and
Aberdeen Fire Department -
iSpyFire

doing something for a different building, whether it be a remodel of an existing building or building a new facility.

Included in the packet was a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Hoquiam and the City of Aberdeen to combine the annual subscription to iSpyFire. The cost for this subscription is \$2,500 of which Aberdeen would pay \$1,500. Councilmember McMillan moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement and his motion was seconded, A brief discussion followed on how this software works, after which the motion to authorize the MOU passed by voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Tsunami Advisory

Chief Myers spoke briefly regarding the recent Tsunami Advisory. It was a good exercise for the City. The first calls came in between 4:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. and that reminds us that we could have a natural disaster in a matter of minutes. He spoke briefly regarding the people who went to the beach to watch the waves. We need to get the messages out to people regarding these emergencies, recognizing that some people don't have facebook or internet. Asst. Chief Miller stated that all of the Departments were communicating as soon the we received the advisory. Police, Fire, Public Works, Admin and other staff were all working together within minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Reschedule Regular
Council Meeting

Councilmember McMillan moved to rescheduled the regular Council meeting from February 14th to February 7th. His motion was seconded and passed by voice vote. It was announced that there will be no Regulatory Committee meeting that night.

Meeting in Person

Councilmember McMillan asked if the staff knows when we will again start meeting in person. Mayor Winkelman stated that we continue to watch what recommendations and regulations are



Council Retreat

coming through Department of Health. Once the cases start to decline, we can look at some kind of hybrid meetings.

Councilmember McMillan announced that there will be a Council Retreat on Wednesday, February 9th at 5:00 (probably via zoom); it will last approximately until 8:00 p.m. Councilmember McMillan moved to set the meeting date and time for the retreat and his motion was seconded and passed by voice vote. Staff asked if they should be in attendance at this retreat and they were instructed to attend for the first hour.

ADJOURN

Councilmember McMillan moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. and his motion was seconded and passed by voice vote.

BEN WINKELMAN – Mayor

TRACY WOOD – City Council Secretary