

**City of Milton-Freewater
City Council Minutes**

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session Monday, August 10, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Albee Room of the Library.

The following members were present: Mayor Lewis Key, Councilors Orrin Lyon, Ed Chesnut, Jeff Anliker, Steve Irving and Brad Humbert. Councilor Hopkins-Hubbard was absent due to being out of town.

Staff members present were: City Manager Linda Hall, City Recorder Leanne Steadman, Public Works Superintendent David Bradshaw, Public Works Supervisor Steve Birdwell and Electric Superintendent Mike Charlo.

Citizens present were: Paul Seaquist, Charlotte Birdwell and Shelby West.

Melanie Hall of the Valley Herald was present.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of minutes from the July 27, 2009 regular council meeting and accounts payable from July 22, 2009 – August 4, 2009.

Councilor Humbert motioned to approve the consent calendar items. Councilor Anliker seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION:

RECOGNITION OF AUGUST 2009 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – STEVE BIRDWELL, PUBLIC WORKS SUPERVISOR

Councilor Chesnut presented Public Works Supervisor Steve Birdwell with the August 2009 Employee of the Month award. Steve has worked for the city for almost thirty (30) years. He has held several positions within the public works department and most currently a Public Works Supervisor of the streets and water departments. He is a supervisor who works alongside his crew and he takes great pride in his work. On behalf of the Mayor and the other City Councilors, Councilor Chesnut presented Steve Birdwell with a one-hundred dollar (\$100) check to show their appreciation.

Paul Seaquist, a Milton-Freewater resident and business owner complimented Steve Birdwell and his crew for the great job they do around the city. He said the entire crew was always polite and courteous. Mr. Seaquist also complimented all city staff and said that he has lived in the area and has seen five different city managers manager the city and he felt with the current manager, Linda Hall, the city ran better, smoother and more cohesive than ever before.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

BID AWARD – PAVING PROJECT #1, OREGON STATE FUND EXCHANGE PROJECT, CONTRACT #225

Public Works Superintendent David Bradshaw reported the city had advertised and accepted sealed bids for the paving project #1. There were two companies that bid on the project; Granite Northwest and Humbert Asphalt Inc. The paving projects have been outline by the public works staff and have been approved projects through the State.

Councilor Anliker said he noticed that Broadway Street was not on the project list.

Mr. Bradshaw said the current bid award was for paving and Broadway Street would be covered under the paving overlay agreement.

Councilor Chesnut motioned to award unit prices as bid for the 2009 Pavement Project #1, Contract #225 to Granite Northwest, Inc. as they were the apparent low bidder. Councilor Anliker seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

BID AWARD FOR ADVANCED METERING INFRASTRUCTURE (AMI) SYSTEM FOR THE ELECTRIC AND WATER DEPARTMENTS

Electric Superintendent Mike Charlo reported that the city had advertised and accepted sealed bids for the Advance Metering Infrastructure System (AMI). There were eight (8) bids received from; Cooper Power Systems, Elster, HD Supply, General Pacific – Itron, General Pacific – TWACS, Tantulus, United Pipe & Supply and Hunt Technologies/Landis. The AMI system would be installed and replace the current electric and water meters. Mr. Charlo explained the system would automatically read electric and water meters, provide increased efficiencies in leak detection, outage reporting, voltage and frequency stability, load management programs, remote disconnect and reconnect, and improved customer relations. The system would include an in-home display screen that would allow for communication with the customer by sending a message that would appear in the display window. The electric department has applied for two different grants that the AMI system would qualify under that would allow for 50% matching funds. The city was one of only thirteen (13) utilities chosen for the Smart Grid grant. These two grants were mentioned on a past agenda and the city council authorized two financial commitment letters in regard to the grant applications. The AMI system replacement was projected to be over a three (3) year period unless the city was successful in obtaining a grant then it would be spread over two (2) years. The funds for the project would be transferred from the Electric Department Operating and Maintenance Reserve fund with the electric and water departments paying back \$100,000 each, per year from the utility infrastructure fee revenue. Staff's recommendation was to award the bid to General Pacific Inc., for the Alcara TWACS AMI system for an amount not to exceed \$1,470,902.99.

Councilor Irving asked what the dollar savings would be by going to the AMI system.

Mr. Charlo said they were currently working on what the savings would be since there were so many items to look at like increased metering accuracy, personnel costs, vehicle expense, cost of meter reading, high bill complaints, doing disconnects and reconnects, etc.

Manager Hall shared a recent water leak problem at one of the local businesses that resulted in 1.2 – 1.6 million gallons of water that was lost and a very high water bill. She said with the new AMI system it would allow for some awareness before that much water was lost due to being able to monitor water usage on the computer and contacting the customer to find out if they were aware of the excessive water usage.

Mr. Bradshaw said the AMI computer system would also flag an account that had been turned off for non-payment or disconnected for some reason and turned back on without authorization.

Councilor Chesnut said he would let the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council know about the business that lost the 1.2 – 1.6 million gallons of water since it would be possibly be re-charging the aquifer and show up on the monitoring program.

Councilor Chesnut motioned to award the bid to General Pacific, Inc. for the Aclara TWACS Automated Infrastructure System for the amount not-to-exceed \$1,470,902.99. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2144, AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE TO A SUBGRANT AGREEMENT WITH GREATER EASTERN OREGON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING A RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

City Manager Linda Hall reported the city had been awarded a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for residential rehabilitation in the amount of \$275,330. CDBG grants may only be administered by a certified non-profit agency. Manager Hall recommended the city contract with Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation (GEODC) who was experienced and has been qualified as an administrator of this type of program.

Councilor Chesnut motioned to adopt Resolution No. 2144, Resolution Authorizing Signature to a Subgrant Agreement with Greater Eastern Oregon Development Corporation for a Community Development Block Grant Funding a Residential Rehabilitation Program. Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Hall reported her and Mr. Bradshaw went to LaGrande, Oregon for a meeting and appeared in front of the North East Area Commission of Transportation (NEACT) Committee. The purpose of the meeting was to outline projects that would qualify for three million dollars (\$3,000,000) that was wrote into House Bill 2001 (HB2001) with thanks from Oregon State Legislature, Representative Greg Smith. The projects can consist of paving and sidewalks which have been outlined by the public works staff and now must be prioritized by the city council which will be on the August 24, 2009 agenda. Manager Hall said she would be filing an appeal with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regarding the classification of the floodplain areas of Milton-Freewater. She said she understood there was congressional support with regard to the maps that FEMA provided that determined the areas to be included in the floodplain zone. She was anticipating there to be \$6,500 - \$10,000 worth of expenses on engineering studies but felt it was for a very important cause to try and get as many properties out of the floodplain. The city auditors, Dickey and Tremper, LLC, has been here for the last three days and will return in October to complete the annual fiscal audit. She also met with Mary Lou Ephlin, who was present at a previous meeting asking questions about the city budget, she explained to her that the city underwent an audit yearly from an outside agency.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Humbert asked what the status was regarding the Teamsters Union contract.

Manager Hall said there was a process that takes place which included several postings, an appeal period and voting ballots that would be mailed to each member from the Employment Relations Board (ERB). The ballots were scheduled to be mailed August 25, 2009 and the employees would have until September 9th or 10th to return them to ERB for an official count. At that point the Relations Board would report on the voting results.

Councilor Chesnut said he had heard from a couple of people who walked before and after business hours that they were running into stray dogs. He said there were a couple of pit bull dogs by Grove School. He suggested having the code enforcement officer patrol at different times other than business hours.

Councilor Irving said he would be on vacation August 24, 2009. He reported that Pendleton Grain Growers (PGG) had a Smart Grid audit performed for lighting. He said the total project would cost \$28,000 to replace all the lighting. There would be \$13,000 in rebates, \$10,000 in tax credits with a total cost to PGG of less than \$6,000.

Councilor Chesnut asked if there needed to be a decision on whether or not the city should be included in the special taxing district for the 450 radio system.

Manager Hall said if council decided to join the special taxing district then a resolution would need to be passed.

Councilor Chesnut said he would be interested in knowing how much it would cost to upgrade to the 700 megahertz system.

A brief discussion ensued and it was announced that there would be a work session prior to the August 24th council meeting for the city council to discuss whether or not to be included in the special taxing district and to discuss the Columbia River Water Exchange project.

Councilor Anliker asked what the status was regarding weed abatements. He said he has noticed a lot of weeds and broken down vehicles.

Manager Hall said this was the first year of imposing a fine on the property owners for abatement rather than having the public works crew do the work and then billing them. She said the owners who have been fined seem to be paying the fee rather than cleaning up the property.

Councilor Humbert suggested bidding out for lawn care services and maintenance and then charge the property owner by the hour for abatement cleanup.

Manager Hall said the suggestion would be taken into consideration.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor