

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

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session Monday, May 11, 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, Brad Humbert, Steve Irving and Sam Hopkins-Hubbard.

Staff members present were: City Manager Linda Hall, Public Works Superintendent Dave Bradshaw, Community Development Supervisor Mike Watkins, Planning/Fire/Community Development Assistant Jennifer Cisneros and City Recorder Leanne Steadman.

Citizens present were: Merle Sherman, Ron Brown, Paul Seaquist, Gordon Hall, Scott Hendricks, Dale McKain, Robert Klein, Casey McClellan and Bob Bower.

Press member Melanie Hall of the Valley Herald was present.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of regular council meeting minutes from April 27, 2009 and accounts payable from April 22nd through May 6th, 2009.

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

PRESENTATION:

RECOGNITION – MAY 2009 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH JENNIFER CISNEROS – PLANNING/FIRE/COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

Councilor Anliker presented May 2009 Employee of the Month to Jennifer Cisneros. Jennifer is the assistant to the Planning, Community Development, Fire and Safety Departments. In the short time Jennifer has been with the city she has made a big impression on her four bosses and the Milton-Freewater public. Her bosses said this about her, "If it was our choice, Jennifer would be Employee of the Month every month. Without fail, Jennifer is always conscientious, extremely pleasant and very competent in her various duties with the city." Councilor Anliker, on behalf of the other council members, presented Jennifer with a \$100 check to show their appreciation.

BOB BOWER – WALLA WALLA BASIN WATERSHED COUNCIL - MONITORING THE SHALLOW AQUIFER IN THE WALLA WALLA RIVER VALLEY

Senior Hydrologist of Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council Bob Bower gave a presentation of monitoring the shallow aquifer in the Walla Walla River Valley. He said their mission statement was to protect the resources in the valley and enhance the health of the watershed while protecting all the cultures of the citizens in the basin. In his presentation he expressed the reason for monitoring the shallow aquifer was due to declining groundwater supplies and the need to be able to create water management tools. The Watershed Council currently has three aquifer recharging projects, one of the tools to try and reverse the trend and protect the groundwater resource. They have partnered with Oregon State University on some numerical ground water bottles that will help with the understanding of the current water situation but also with recharging and water management. The state used to have thirteen (13) monitoring wells, only nine (9) were left, the others had gone dry. Mr. Bower said that was an indication

the water levels were in decline. He said the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council was one of the leading Watersheds in the Pacific Northwest that was trying to solve and fix the problem. He explained that the underground resource determines the surface resources as well. Mr. Bower explained the process of how the aquifer works starting with precipitation which was the sole resource of the process. His presentation consisted of geographical maps and illustrations of the several layers to the aquifer. Mr. Bower said with the stimulus money available they are planning fourteen (14) more recharge projects in the area. As far as groundwater monitoring there are two methods for achieving information the first one being existing wells and the second being dedicated wells. The existing wells are likely shallow wells that are no longer used for water supply purposes and dedicated wells would be willing landowners that would allow a well to be drilled for monitoring.

Casey McClellan – 1212 Pleasant St., Walla Walla, WA. asked if the Watershed Council had a basalt monitoring program.

Mr. Bower said they didn't, the State of Oregon was more involved with the basalt monitoring at this point. He said the Department of Ecology has asked for the Watershed Council to incorporate that monitoring into their program. The Department of Ecology has one basalt monitoring well at Loucher Rd. off Stateline Rd. Mr. Bower said more information was available on the Watershed Council website www.wwbwc.org

APPROVAL OF NEW GRAPHIC SIGN TO BE PAINTED ON THE SOUTH WATER RESERVOIR

City Manager Linda Hall reported that she had been contacted by the President of the Community Development Partnership (CDP), Paul Seaquist with a proposal to replace the south water reservoir sign with a new sign. The goal of the new sign was to have consistent entryway signage from Walla Walla, Lowden, Dayton and Milton-Freewater showing this as a tourism region. She felt the sign was very attractive and she understood the goal. She has heard from several staff members and citizens voicing their concern that the "WALLA WALLA VALLEY" should be swapped and in a smaller font size or same font size with the "MILTON-FREEWATER" portion of the sign on top.

Paul Seaquist – 684 College St. said that CDP had not approved the sign yet. He said they were meeting on Thursday, May 14th, 2009. He said CDP was part of the Walla Walla Partnership which included Dayton, Waitsburg, Walla Walla and Downtown Walla Walla Foundation. Mr. Seaquist said the goal of the sign was to try and tie the whole Walla Walla Valley together. He felt the long term goal would be to have a sign similar to the one being presented at the entrance of Dayton, Waitsburg, Walla Walla, Touchet and Milton-Freewater. He said the funding for the sign would come from CDP costing around eight to ten thousand dollars (\$8,000 - \$10,000). CDP receives approximately thirteen to sixteen thousand dollars (\$13,000 - \$16,000) each year from the Port of Umatilla. Mr. Seaquist said the sign was one of the projects that had been discussed with the Port of Umatilla in trying to tie the valleys together. He asked that the sign be approved as it was submitted. He said CDP had sponsored other projects in Milton-Freewater such as the entrance signs at both ends of town as well as the flag pole at the triangle. Mr. Seaquist said the designer of the sign Gordon Hall was present if there were any question.

Gordon Hall – 53196 Stateline Rd. asked if there were any questions on the design of the sign.

Councilor Chesnut said he had not had a chance to look at the Walla Walla sign currently at the north east of town.

Mr. Hall said the sign was similar but it said Walla Walla specifically. He said he understood from a meeting that they liked the concept of Walla Walla Valley. He was asked from CDP to come up with something along that line and that is what he came up with.

Councilor Chesnut asked if there was an agency that would be making the decision regarding the sign in Touchet.

Mr. Seaquist said the partnership currently involved Dayton, Waitsburg and Downtown Walla Walla Foundation.

Councilor Chesnut said he liked the sign but had concern with Walla Walla Valley. He said he polled four (4) different people and received four (4) different comments. The comments were to paint over the current sign and plant arborvitaes, leave the existing sign alone, suggested having Milton-Freewater first and a comment of how many people would get down to the bottom of the hill and think they were in Walla Walla. He liked the consistency aspect and would like to be a part of the overall regional marketing effort but he would like to be a little bit more sold on what consistency there would be and how many other people had bought into the concept.

Mr. Hall said changes could be made to the sign. He also said they researched the type of application for the sign, vinyl versus painting. Mr. Hall felt painting was more expensive but felt it would last longer. They could not find anyone to guarantee vinyl past five (5) years.

Councilor Hopkins-Hubbard agreed with Councilor Chesnut and felt there needed to be consistency with signs in Waitsburg, Touchet, Walla Walla and Milton-Freewater for the branding to be efficient. If every city changed the wording for their city then you have lost what you were trying to achieve.

Councilor Anliker felt all the signs would need to be consistent if the goal was to brand the Walla Walla Valley.

Councilor Lyon said he was approached by several citizens at the Junior Show regarding the sign they had seen in the Walla Walla Union Bulletin. He said none of them liked the sign the way it read. They preferred to have Milton-Freewater first and some citizens said to leave the water tower just the way it was.

A discussion ensued of possible language and layout of the sign.

Dale McKain – 54795 Walla Walla River Rd. said from the outside region when Walla Walla was mentioned people automatically think of the Washington State Penitentiary execution. He spoke on behalf of himself and his wife Kittie Custer, they both felt the sign should read Walla Walla River Valley. He felt it was the center of the valley.

Ron Brown – 84156 Winesap Rd. said his business had recently gone through the same scenario. He said a lot of times when he travels to talk about cider and wine Milton-Freewater is not known but Walla Walla Valley was recognized. He said his apple gift packs were labeled Walla Walla Valley Orchards and the wine bottles were labeled, if there were in this Appalachian, Walla Walla Valley. He felt the Walla Walla Valley was a brand and he agreed with the council in that all the signs needed to be consistent otherwise he agreed that Milton-Freewater should be named first. He felt if everyone worked on branding the Walla Walla Valley with its diversity and it's well known Walla Walla Sweet Onions and many businesses using the Walla Walla name. He said Walla Walla meant many waters. Mr.

Brown felt Walla Walla Valley was a brand that was well known and could benefit Milton-Freewater.

Councilor Chesnut suggested tabling the subject until next council meeting and improve the confidence on the consistency of the other signs for the other cities.

Mr. Seaquist said there would be no affect of tabling the approval of the sign.

Councilor Lyon suggested that Mr. Seaquist find out from other cities what their thoughts were.

Mr. Seaquist said it may be a long term project for other cities.

Councilor Humbert felt if other cities followed suit with the Walla Walla Valley branding then he approved otherwise he would like to see Milton-Freewater on top. He said he had talked to a lot of people who felt Milton-Freewater should be named first.

Community Development Supervisor Mike Watkins felt if everyone was consistent with the signs then it would have more to offer. He said he worked for the City of Milton-Freewater and loved Milton-Freewater and would like to see Milton-Freewater in big bold letters but that's not necessarily what would sell Milton-Freewater. He said he did not like the term "Gateway" to Milton-Freewater he felt it was bland and overused. Walla Walla Valley is what is getting notarized.

Merle Sherman – 716 Pierce, said he preferred Milton-Freewater to be on top of Walla Walla Valley. He suggested that the paper run a poll on what people wanted.

Manager Hall confirmed that council agreed with the concept of the sign and the wording could be worked out.

Council consensus was to table the sign approval until the next council meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 2124, RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE TO A FUND EXCHANGE AGREEMENT WITH OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) FUNDS CONTRACT NO. 25594

Public Works Superintendent Dave Bradshaw reported that the City of Milton-Freewater had applied for and received a grant for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds through the Oregon Department of Transportation in the amount of one hundred forty thousand eight hundred fifty six dollars (\$140,856). ODOT has agreed to offer the city the option of delivering the ARRA funds with the state funds through the fund exchange process. This would eliminate the need to obtain extensive engineering reporting but the city would only received ninety four percent (94%) of the federal funding which would be one hundred thirty two thousand four hundred five dollars (\$132,405). The other six percent (6%) would remain at the state level for their administrative expenses. In order for the streets to qualify they must be considered arterial/urban collectors by ODOT. Staff has compiled a list of streets that would qualify for the fund exchange program.

Councilor Chesnut motion to adopt Resolution No. 2124, Resolution Authorizing Signature to the 2009 Fund Exchange Agreement American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, No. 25594. Councilor Anliker seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2125, AMENDING THE AQUATIC CENTER EMPLOYEE PAY PLAN

Manager Hall reported that Human Resource Officer Teresa Dutcher was ill and she would be presenting her agenda items. She reported that the Oregon State minimum wage had increased January 1, 2009 from \$7.95 to \$8.40 per hour which was a 5.66% increase. The increase primarily affected the Aquatic Center concession/cashier personnel which in turn also had a domino effect on the other pay scales at the pool. Because of the increase in the minimum wage staff was also proposing to increase the Lifeguard pay from \$8.30 to \$8.65 per hour and the Lifeguard/Instructor pay from \$8.50 to \$8.80 per hour. There was no proposal to increase the Lead Lifeguard or Aquatic Center Manager wages.

Councilor Anliker motion to adopt Resolution No. 2125, Resolution Amending the Aquatic Center Employee Pay Plan by Adjusting Concession/Cashier, Lifeguard and Lifeguard/Instructor Pay Scales. Councilor Hopkins-Hubbard seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2126, AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF OREGON PUBLIC TRANSIT DIVISION FOR AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) FUNDS CONTRACT NO. 25639

RESOLUTION NO. 2127, AUTHORIZING SIGNATURE TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF OREGON PUBLIC TRANSIT DIVISION FOR AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT (ARRA) FUNDS CONTRACT NO. 25715

Manager Hall reported that the City of Milton-Freewater had applied for and received two (2) different grants under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) through the Public Transit Division. One of the grants were for nineteen thousand two hundred dollars (\$19,200) to install two (2) additional bus shelters which would make a total of five (5) bus shelters. The other grant was for a new van with a wheelchair lift and two tie-down stations and would provide preventive maintenance funds for all capital equipment for the para-transit program. The total grant was for sixty four thousand eight hundred fifty dollars (\$64,850).

Councilor Chesnut motion to adopt Resolution No. 2126, Resolution Authorizing Signature to ODOT Grant Agreement No. 25639, an Agreement Between ODOT – Public Transit Division and the City of Milton-Freewater for 5311 ARRA Capital Funds to Provide Transportation Vehicle and Preventative Maintenance in Reimbursable Grant Funds up to \$64,850.

Councilor Humbert seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Councilor Humbert motion to adopt Resolution No. 2127, Resolution Authorizing Signature to ODOT Grant Agreement No. 25715, an Agreement Between ODOT – Public Transit Division and the City of Milton-Freewater for 5311 ARRA Capital Funds to Provide Capital Facilities in Reimbursable Grant Funds up to nineteen thousand two hundred dollars (\$19,200). Councilor Chesnut seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Hall presented an agenda item under the managers report that she suggested be considered for approval that being the acceptance of the dedication of the right-a-way that ran along Catherine Avenue. She stated the process had been going on for quite some time. This oversight was discovered when a property owner, Mr. Weis, tried to sell his property and it was at that time discovered that the property had not been dedicated as the right-of-way. The other joint owner was the School District and they have no problem signing off on the deed except that on the original deed the school's name was listed District 31 so they need to have the name changed to their current name and then go through the process of signing off on the

deed after that has been done. Staff's recommendation is to accept the Catherine Avenue right-of-way to correct the Umatilla County maps.

Councilor Humbert motion to accept the right-of-way deed for Catherine Avenue. Councilor Chesnut seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Manager Hall thanked Councilor Lyon for being the city's representative at the M-F Junior Show livestock sale the past weekend. She gave an update on the floodplain and said she should be hearing from Oregon Solutions on if the city's application has been accepted. There would be some expense but felt this was a very important matter and she would work with the M-F Flood Control District to come up with the funds.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Lyon reported that he purchased two (2) lambs on the city's behalf for community support at the M-F Junior Show.

Councilor Chesnut reported there would be a Blue Mountain Alliance meeting May 13, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Building regarding the wind projects projected for the Blue Mountains and there would be additional panoramic pictures on display. He said he had not heard back from any other councilor volunteering to serve as the city's representative on the Watershed Council.

Councilor Irving said he would volunteer. Council consensus was that Councilor Irving would serve as the city representative at the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council meetings.

Councilor Anliker encouraged everyone to attend the Blue Mountain Alliance meeting on Wednesday.

Councilor Irving said there was a good turnout at the Milton-Freewater Area Chamber of Commerce meeting and there was a lot of interest in what was going on with the wind projects. He said he and his wife ate at the Golf Course Restaurant on Friday night and they had a prime rib dinner that was excellent and then they went back for the Mother's Day Sunday buffet which was also very good.

Councilor Lyon said that President Obama was proposing to make the Blue Mountains into a wilderness area. He encouraged contact with state representatives to voice their views.

There being no further business the council adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Lewis S. Key, Mayor