

MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON
CONNELL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
August 3, 2020

The Remote Regular meeting of the Connell City Council was called to order by Mayor Barrow at 6:00 pm in the City Hall.

ROLL CALL

ROLL CALL: (Remote) Councilmember's: Mayor Pro Tem Joe Escalera, John White, Pat Barrera, Shelly Harper, and Katrina Kunkel.

PRESENT: Mayor Lee Barrow, City Administrator Maria Peña, City Clerk Marissa Ortiz, and Police Chief Chris Turner.
(Remote) -Public Works Director Hallie Tuck, Fire Chief Ken Woffenden and City Attorney Dan Hultgrenn.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion: Councilmember Barrera moved to approve the consent calendar as presented:

- a) Minutes of the Remote Council Meeting July 20, 2020
- b) Application for Payment No.2 – 5th Ave/Franklin St. & Fulton St./Chelan Ave. Water Line project for \$92,293.64
- c) Accounts Payable 8/3/2020 for \$156,368.56
- d) Payroll Register 7/15/2020-7/20/2020 for \$70,919.17

Councilmember Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to approve the agenda as amended:(item #9 – added wording to resolution, item #12 –wording updated to motion/added attachments, items #13 & #14 were added). Councilmember Harper seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

SOLAR GRANT – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

City Administrator Maria Peña informed City Council that throughout the evaluation of our facilities for cost savings, an item of recommendation was the installation of solar panels at Well Pump #8. To maximize savings for this project would be to Request for Proposals instead of using the State's Energy Program. For this project to be feasible the City would need to obtain two grants to offset expenses. Preliminary numbers were provided to the Council, but the actual cost would depend on the outcome of the RFP's. Scott Lewis from Apollo Solutions joined remotely to provide Council with additional information.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Escalera moved to approve staff to place a Request for Proposal for Well Pump #8 Solar Project. Councilmember Barrera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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FRANKLIN PUD KIOSK

City Administrator Maria Peña stated she had been approached by Brian Johnson, Risk Mitigation/Auditor at Franklin PUD regarding partnering in the installation of a kiosk at the Desert Labor building. The kiosk would allow customers to pay their PUD bills by cash, credit card, and check. The customer would receive a receipt for their payment and would allow payments to be made 24/7. If the City chose to partner, then the kiosk would accept City utility payments as well. They requested to have the City make a weekly deposit for PUD in exchange for including the ability for customers to pay their City utility bills. Also requested was that we split the capitol cost of retrofitting the window for the kiosk, potentially a cost of \$5,000 to the City. They intended to have one kiosk placed in Connell and 3 in Pasco. If we partnered with them all their kiosks would include the City of Connell. Staff was exploring the kiosk company and our accounting software company to see how it would work for us. In conclusion City Administrator Peña pointed out that PUD advised that they likely would not continue to contract with the City for help with payments and application processing. This meant we would lose the \$24,000 compensation to the City for those services.

Consensus of the Council was to not move forward with splitting the capitol cost with Franklin PUD for retrofitting a window for a kiosk installation at the Desert Labor building.

RESOLUTION NO 2020-06 THE GENERAL SUPPORT FUND INTERFUND LOAN

Public Works Director Hallie Tuck stated in 2019 Council approved the 2020 budget and it included a \$200,000 interfund loan from the general support fund to the water fund to partially fund the 5th and Franklin/Chelan and Almira waterline project. This was done so that the water budget would maintain reserves for emergency use. The term of this loan would not exceed 10 years at 1.58% interest rate. This was the same interest rate for the Country Estates/Striker Sewer project with the Public Works Board.

Motion: Councilmember Harper moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-06 authorizing an interfund loan from the General Support Fund to the Water Fund in the amount of \$200,000 for a term of 10 years at the annual interest rate of 1.58%. Mayor Pro Tem Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

TASK ORDER ENGINEERING SERVICES COMMUNITY CENTER PARKING LOT

Provided for Council was a Task Order authorizing Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc. to provide the design, construction engineering services for the City's Community Center parking lot project. It would include spot repair, soil stabilization recommendations, grading, paving, stormwater improvements, and striping. This task order should not exceed \$32,000 for services provided.

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to approve Task Order for the Community Center Parking Lot Engineering services not to exceed \$32,000 for services. Mayor Pro Tem Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ON STREET CLOSURE

Mayor Lee Barrow informed Council that the City had been looking into ways to help local business owners. One way was to allow for expanded outdoor service by businesses. A discussion was held to block North Columbia Avenue Main Street between Adams Street and

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Borah Street on Fridays and Saturdays. City staff had spoken with the Health Department who advised that it was acceptable if only existing businesses expanded out. No outside vendors could come in and utilize the space. A Farmer’s Market was allowed as long they followed the requirements from the Health Department. Mayor Barrow encouraged the upper town businesses who are on private property to expand out in their area if they chose. Mayor Barrow also voiced masking up and social distancing.

Councilmember Kunkel abstained from voting.

Motion: Councilmember Barrera moved to authorize the Mayor the right to block North Columbia Ave. between Adams & Borah Streets as he sees fit. Mayor Pro Tem Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

SMALL BUSINESS GRANTS

Following discussion on how to find ways to help local businesses, City Administrator Peña gave an additional plan. She stated on March 17, 2020 the Washington Attorney General issued a memo to state and local governments clarifying the guidance on analyzing issues relating to gifts of public funds during COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, on April 6, the Attorney General Office issued further guidance concluding that local governments would provide cash assistance to low-income individuals struggling due to COVID-19 consistent with gift of public fund restrictions. City Administrator Peña requested Council’s approval to provide small business grants out of our City Economic Development Reserve Fund not to exceed \$100,000. The Finance Meeting would need to meet to establish grant requirements. An outside party, such as Community Action Connections may perhaps manage the grant applications and approvals.

PURCHASE OF 911 PENDANTS

Provided for Council was information on 911 pendants. City Administrator Maria Peña was notified by the staff from Meals-on-Wheels program in Connell that they had come across someone who had fallen and was not able to get up. Not until staff stopped by to deliver their meal did, they find this elderly individual to get them the help they needed. These 911 pendants operated the same as 911 emergency calls, but cell phone service was needed for the call to be picked up. When the button was activated it would go directly to the local 911 dispatch. The person would provide their address or location, the 911 call center would not have access to it. There were no monthly fees, only a one-time purchase of fee of approximately \$65. City Administrator Peña requested to purchase 5 to 10 911 pendants and be given to the elderly or disabled. Guidelines would be set up using the criteria the City currently used for the low-income senior/disabled reduced utility fees.

Motion: Councilmember White moved to purchase 5, 911 pendants. Mayor Pro Tem Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ORDINANCE NO. 1009-2020 TELECOMMUNICATIONS FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

Joseph Franell on behalf of Blue Mountain Networks, LLC an entity that included Eastern Oregon Telecom (EOT) and Gorge Networks (GN), had applied for a telecommunications franchise with the City of Connell. A telecommunication franchise was required of any telecommunication provider or carrier who desired to occupy public ways of the city and to provide telecommunication services to any person or area in the city (CMC 12.28.010). Anyone

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who desired a telecommunication franchise was required to file an application with the City, requirements were found (CMC 12.28.020). Before a decision was made on the franchise agreement ordinance, per (CMC 12.28.030) a Public Hearing had to be conducted. It was scheduled to be held on August 17, 2020.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Mayor Lee Barrow –

1. Connell Swimming Pool was set to open soon, very restrictive on what would be allowed.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business before the City Council of Connell Mayor Barrow adjourned the meeting at 7:51 pm.

ATTEST: 
Marissa Ortiz, City Clerk


Lee Barrow, Mayor