

MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON  
CONNELL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON

June 20, 2016

The regular semi-monthly meeting, of the Connell City Council was called to order by Mayor Blackwell at 6:00 pm in the City Hall and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mayor Bruce Blackwell, and Councilmember's: Rhonda Quinton, Kathie Silva, Joe Escalera, and Ray Minor.

EXCUSED: Councilmember Minor moved to excuse Mayor Pro Tem Huber. Councilmember Quinton seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

STAFF: Attorney Dan Hultgrenn, City Administrator Jed Crowther, Public Works Director Larry Turner, Fire Chief Chris Schulte, Police Chief Chris Turner, and City Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña.

VISITORS: Kathy Bingham, Franklin County Graphic; Helen Tobin, Mid-Columbia Libraries; Citizens: Gene Stocking, John White, Sterling Joyner, Jennifer Walker, Allison Walker, Regina Grassl, and Laurie Mandler.

CORRESPONDENCE/PRESENTATIONS/APPOINTMENTS

Paul Clark resigned from the Connell City Planning Commission.

CONSENT CALENDAR

**Motion:** Councilmember Quinton moved to approve the Consent Calendar as listed:

- a) Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting June 6, 2016
- b) Minutes of the Special Council Meeting June 10, 2016
- c) Accounts Payable June 20, 2016 for \$ 59,566.80
- d) Payroll Register 6/15-6/20/2016 for \$54,391.46
- e) Preliminary Plat – Tyler Creek – Request for 1-year extension to July 20, 2017
- f) HDR Invoice Documentation – Connell Rail Interchange Project

Councilmember Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENT/NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Helen Tobin spoke on the summer reading program through the Mid-Columbia Library.

Melissa Kelly 675 E Ash- spoke in favor of the utility tax to support the pool. She would like to see the pool in the 2017 Budget. The citizens would not be doing fund raisers for the pool.

Gene Stocking 440 E Ash-Congratulated the Mayor& Councilmember's for violating the trust of the citizens. Pool was a big issue and draws people to our community.

Regina Grassl- was concerned with explaining why there is no pool in Connell for kids to swim this year.

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Jennifer Walker 380 Access Road- summer was time for kid to get some recreational time. Citizens are going to other communities to use pools and spend their money.

Helen Tobin-serves on the Park Board and stated people want the pool. Asked council to review the pool numbers again.

John White-talked on behalf of the pool and how kids need something to do in the summer. Mr. White would like to see the Mayor and City Administrator behind opening the pool.

Burl Booker-Fire Commission for Franklin County. Railroad owned properties were not being mowed and is a fire hazard.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**Motion:** Councilmember Silva moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Quinton seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

#### SIX-YEAR TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2017-2022

Public Works Director Turner provided Councilmember's with the completed Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan 2017-2022.

**Motion:** Councilmember Minor moved to adopt Resolution No 2016-08 adopting the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan 2017-2022. Councilmember Quinton seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

#### CITY ADMINISTRATOR RESIGNATION & TRANSITION

City Administrator written resignation letter was received from Jed Crowther.

**Motion:** Councilmember Silva moved to accept the resignation of Jed Crowther as City Administrator. Councilmember Minor seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion was held on a suitable transition. Replacement methods included: Direct Appointment, Internal Recruitment, or Public recruitment. Mayor Blackwell would like to direct appoint current City Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña.

Council held discussions and the following was heard:

- 1) Would like to see it go through the recruitment process
- 2) Consensus was that Maria would do an excellent job
- 3) Maria has been very professional in her job
- 4) Could do the job

Attorney Dan Hultgren spoke on behalf of hiring Maria Peña as the City Administrator.

**Motion:** Councilmember Minor would like to concur with mayor appointment of Maria Peña as City Administrator and bring back a contract for council's approval. Councilmember Escalera seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

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City Clerk/Treasurer Maria Peña Thanked Councilmember's for their words of encouragement as she takes on the city administrator position.  
Current City Administrator Jed Crowther stated that Maria would do a great job for the City of Connell.

COMMITTEE / DEPARTMENT REPORTS

CITY ADMINISTRATOR – Jed Crowther

- 1) Issued a letter to the Recreation and Conservation Office
- 2) Reviewed pool solutions and worked that had been done concerning the pool
- 3) Reviewed letter in favor of the pool

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR – Larry Turner

- 1) Meeting with Department of Health
- 2) Waste water energy audit
- 3) Water System Plan
- 4) Six-Year Transportation Plan approved

POLICE DEPARTMENT – Police Chief Chris Turner

- 1) Grant provided a CVS machine to collect old medicines
- 2) Graduated 2 from reserve academy
- 3) 5<sup>th</sup> Safest City to live in

FIRE CHIEF- Chris Schulte

- 1) Fireworks –Pyrotechnician meeting scheduled
- 2) Grant for 3 generators not approved but received a generator from Emergency Management
- 3) There was a wild land fire

CITY COUNCIL CLOSING REMARKS

- 1) Pool needs to be on the ballot
- 2) Bring back something to next meeting on the electricity tax
- 3) Appreciated all those that attended the council meeting
- 4) No pool committee was formed yet

Mayor Blackwell informed everyone that he had been misquoted. He was in favor of the pool but you can't spend money you don't have. People should do some research instead of wallowing.

MEETING RECESSED

Mayor Blackwell recessed the regular meeting at 7:02 pm to go into Executive session for 15 minutes to discuss with legal counsel representing the City litigation or potential litigation to which the City, or a city council member or employee is, or may be, a party.

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MEETING RECONVENED

Mayor Blackwell called the regular meeting back to order at 7:17 pm.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business before the City Council of Connell Mayor Blackwell adjourned the meeting at 7:17 pm.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rose Courneya, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Blackwell, Mayor