

City Council Minutes
February 23, 2015

Mayor Thayer called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Present: Councilors Paul Canter, Harry Myers, Ron Thexton (via telephone), Lonnie Koroush, Cindy Canter and Donna Dillard. Staff present included Chief Operating Officer Jim Minard, Finance Officer Dave Williams, and Public Works Superintendent Dave Claborn.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Thayer adjusted the agenda to accommodate Fred Miller, from Astound Broadband, who provided the Council with some background on his company and its requested franchise. He explained that his company was installing fiber to connect cell towers in the valley. He did not expect that broadband service would be made available to individuals or local businesses for at least several more years; though he anticipated a splice or station junction would be installed to serve Monroe. The company was anticipating doing overhead lines on existing poles, but would be willing to go underground if other utilities were required to do so.

Mayor Thayer asked about what impact this might have on the local telephone and cable company. Miller responded there would no negative impact and the proposed fiber might actually complement Monroe Telephone. Councilors Koroush and C. Canter asked about operational aspects; Miller noted that they were just installing a larger "pipe" with the fiber inside that would provide additional service capacity. Councilor P. Canter noted this cable would actually improve communications in both speed and capacity. Councilor Myers asked about the need for "booster" stations as AT&T had. Miller noted that they would still be needed, but far few than with the old lines. Mayor Thayer noted we still needed more information and some resolution to the compensation issue and the matter was tabled to next month.

STAFF COMMENTS:

P.W.S. Claborn discussed his monthly report and noted that there were issues with the water pump in the plant and he was investigating the best means to extract it for repair.

C.O.O Minard noted most of his topics would be covered under New Business.

Lori O'Hare, from the Scare and Share, updated the Council on the past October's program at the Haunted House (owned by the City on the east side of the Long Tom River). O'Hare mentioned that attendance was up by over 100 people and the local groups the program supported. She noted the group had added two projects to their funding programs; one of which was the Christmas Treat Bags.

P. Canter asked if the Scare and Share was qualified as a "non-profit". O'Hare stated they were not; she had asked their accountant about such, but was advised the program was still too small. Many persons in the audience spoke in support of the projects funded through the Haunted House and pointed out the volunteers did all the work on the property and building and no city funds were involved. C. Canter asked about insurance and use of alcohol at the Haunted House. O'Hare stated they were insured and the City was named as co-insured on the binder. There was one instance last year of an intoxicated man who was escorted from the line to enter the Haunted House, but there were no problems.

P. Canter requested Scare and Share provide an accounting of the donations they make for the cities file to help justify their use of city owned property for free. O'Hare said should would be happy to provide a spreadsheet.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minard noted several new bills had come in after the packets were delivered last week and new payable sheets were in front of them with the additions denoted on the sheets. Councilor Thexton noted the accounts payable did not have the full total for USA Blue Book. C. Canter moved to accept the consent agenda as amended and excluding the Monroe Telephone bills, which was seconded by Councilor Koroush and approved 6-0.

Councilor Koroush moved to approve the Monroe Telephone bills, which was seconded by P. Canter and approved 5-0-1 (Dillard abstained).

NEW BUSINESS:

2014 Audit Review: Finance Officer Dave Williams presented the results of the 2014 Audit Report. Minard noted that this audit was from the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2014, prior to Mr. Williams beginning work. Mr. Williams noted that the City's financial position was in good shape; however, there were several accounting procedures that the auditor has been suggesting be undertaken in an effort to provide more "checks and balances" over the accounting process. These were detailed in the Resolution No. 2014-06: Corrective Action Plan for Deficiencies in the 2014 Annual Audit Report to be discussed later by the Council. He advised the Council that he had already begun to implement these suggestions with the C.O.O. verifying and signing off on the accounting procedures. Mayor Thayer noted that the city had received a \$1500 credit on our audit fee based on the assistance that Mr. Williams was able to offer the auditors. This was the first such rebate in his memory.

Mayor Thayer questioned what had become of the committee of Councilors he appointed address the auditor's concerns a few years back. Councilor Koroush noted he had offered to serve on that committee, but they could not determine what they were signing off given the information provided. Councilor Dillard stated that if the auditor was suggesting the C.O.O. or Councilor review and sign off on these accounting practices, she was agreeable to having C.O.O. Minard perform those duties. It was determined that Minard would review and sign off on these accounting practices and Koroush also participate.

Resolution No. 2014-06: Corrective Action Plan for Deficiencies in the 2014 Annual Audit Report: Minard noted the resolution was required under Oregon law when deficiencies were identified in the Audit Report. The response to those issues raised by the auditor were taken directly from the audit report and incorporated into the resolution. After noting a typographical error. Councilor Myers moved to approve the Resolution, which was seconded by P. Canter and approved 6-0.

Local Government Investment Pool Update: Mr. Williams advised the Council that he had investigated other options for investing the City's funds. He spoke with the Branch Manager of the local Umpqua Bank and they spoke with the bank's public investment advisor. It was determined that the City could not do much better than its current investment practices with the Local Government Investment Pool run by the State of Oregon. *{Note: the telephone connection with Thexton was lost around this time}.*

Ordinance No. 2015-001: An Ordinance Amending Sections of Chapters 50 and 51 of the Monroe Municipal Code Relating to Ordinance Sewer and Water Services. Minard noted that the intent of this amending ordinance was to allow the Council to make changes to utility billing by resolution instead of the more cumbersome amending ordinance process. Many of these changes were incorporated into the resolution next on the agenda that addressed rates, interest charges, penalties for accounts need to be disconnected from service and provide conformity with current practices. C. Canter moved to have the first reading of the Ordinance by title only, which was seconded by Myers and approved unanimously. Mayor Thayer gave the first reading of the ordinance by title only. Koroush moved to have the second reading by title only, which was seconded by Myers and unanimously approved. Mayor Thayer gave the second reading of the ordinance by title only. Myers moved to adopt Ordinance 2015-001, which was seconded by P. Canter and unanimously approved.

Resolution on Utility Rates and Procedures: Minard explained this resolution basically addressed those issues that were just amended in the prior amending ordinance. He noted the resolution called for a three-percent (3%) increase in the base water rate only, clarified current practices on charging late fees on delinquent accounts, and provided for a fee to be assessed when shut off notices were required to be placed on individual properties. C. Canter moved to have the shut-off notice fee be established at \$10, which was seconded by Koroush and approved 5-0. Koroush noted he could not support having the shut off fee and increase in water rates incorporated into the same resolution. He moved to accept the resolution as amended and with the three percent increase removed. The motion was seconded by Myers and approved 5-0

Margaret E. Hull Bequest: Minard noted he had met with Belle Cantor of the Oregon Community Foundation that administers the \$60,000 bequest from Mrs. Hull for maintaining the Legion Hall. Per Mrs. Hull's directives the funds were to be used by the end of this year – though we do have some flexibility for an additional year or so for a bona-fide project; if not, the money would go into the Foundation's "permanent fund", with annual distributions of 4.5% of the principal paid to the City. However, they are willing to listen to any reasonable counter offer the City might have. Minard had not projects in mind and perhaps the best deal is take the life-time annuity.

P. Canter noted some issues that could be considered, which included the concerns with the foundation and the security system. It was uncertain if the remaining funds would be adequate to address the foundation issues – if in fact there were outstanding problems with the foundation. Canter moved to authorize Myers to continue his research on a security system for the Legion Hall for purchase by the City. C. Canter seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Myers noted that the heat pumps might need to be checked at the Legion Hall as they were making some noise when he walked by earlier that evening.

2015 Goal Implementing Plan: No comments

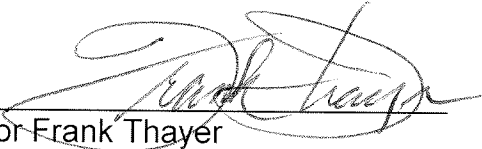
OTHER BUSINESS:


C. Canter noted the Beautification Committee and MonroeFest would be meeting on March 2nd at 4:30 and 6:00 PM, respectively.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business Mayor Thayer adjourned the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Minutes 2-23

Signed: 
Mayor Frank Thayer

Attest: 
Chief Operating Officer Jim Minard