



MONROE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

November 22, 2021

6:00 PM

City Hall Meeting Room

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Sheets called the City Council meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Sheets asked Councilor Winther to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Sheets; Councilors: Cuthbertson, Lindner, Knott, Ritch, Winther

Absent: Councilor Baker

Staff present: CA Martinenko

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Tommy Houston, VFW Post Commander, asked about the donation of bricks that he requested at the previous Council meeting for a Veteran Memorial in the lot next to the South Benton Museum on 5th Street. Mayor Sheets replied the bricks will be held and not sold pending a decision from the Planning Commission.

3. **STAFF REPORTS:**

- 3.1. **Benton County Sheriff**

The Sheriff's department presented their monthly report. Councilor Ritch commented on the positive things he heard about the Halloween patrol. Councilor Knott commented about parking issues on 7th street and some vandalism. It was noted these incidents were not on the report and there was discussion about how the Sheriff's department is notified. Councilor Lindner commented that the reports may have only been on the Facebook community group and CA Martinenko mentioned to encourage citizens to report property damage, no matter how small, to the Sheriff's department so it can be logged and investigated.

- 3.2. **City Administrator**

CA Martinenko reported on the progress with the Corps of Engineer's 1135 grant and the impact to the City water intake if the water level is lowered due to proposed alternatives for fish passage. In addition, effort is being made to rezone the City to be in more alignment with State model code and also to provide more flexibility with planning. A section of gravel area at the north end of the former Wilbur-Ellis actually belongs to the City and plans are being made to survey and delineate the area for City use only. Public works staff, with the assistance of City of Harrisburg Public Works, performed smoke testing for the sewer and storm water system. A major issue was found in the wetlands area to the east of the Red Hills development and will need to be repaired. CA Martinenko provided Council with an overview of the report for the Brickyard EPA Phase II Brownfields assessment that concluded there were no issues that had to be remediated. Last, the City through the Community Engagement Committee is working with the Meals on Wheels program and Oregon Cascades West Council of



Governments to establish a home delivered meal program in Monroe. The Meals on Wheels program is ready to deliver meals and help organize volunteers when the City is ready.

4. **PRESENTATIONS:** Mayor Sheets presented the Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award to Kathy Smith for over 30 years of service to the community and over 20 years as Chair of the Planning Commission.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

5.1. Councilor Ritch commented on the routine, budgeted transfers of funds between accounts. Mayor Sheets then called for a motion to approve the consent calendar. Councilor Ritch so moved and Councilor Knott seconded. There was no discussion. Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Winther: Abstain; Councilor Knott: Yes; Councilor Lindner: Yes; Councilor Ritch: Yes; Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes. Motion Carried.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

6.1. **Ordinance 2021-03.** Mayor Sheets opened public hearing for Ordinance 2021-03, adopting amendments pertaining to the transportation elements in both the city's development code and chapter 12, Transportation, in the City's 2020 Comprehensive Plan. No conflicts of interest were declared by any of the Council present. CA Martinenko then summarized the staff report prepared by Associate Planner Pat Deppa. Mayor Sheets asked a clarifying question about the highway corridor overlay and the reply by staff is that the current overlay will stay in place until the Planning Commission recommends replacing it with the Riverside District Master plan corridor overlay. Councilor Cuthbertson noted that sidewalks and planter strips were struck from required improvements. Staff replied that the Planning Commission made that recommendation so the system would be simpler and more affordable with current infrastructure. Mayor Sheets then called for public testimony. There were no comments presented in favor, not in favor, or neutral. Mayor Sheets then closed the public hearing and called for a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-03. Councilor Ritch so motioned and Councilor Lindner seconded. Mayor Sheets asked for questions or comments. There were none and Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Winther: Yes; Councilor Knott: Yes; Councilor Lindner: Yes; Councilor Ritch: Yes; Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes. Motion Carried.

6.2. **Planning Commission Vacancy.** Mayor Sheets noted there is an application for the current vacancy on the Planning Commission and called on Kristen Strand for an introduction and to talk about her experience as a potential candidate. She indicated that she has a degree in public policy and planning, and described her interest in Monroe especially with growth and challenges such as water and wetlands. Councilor Ritch commented that it would be great to have representation from Red Hills. Mayor Sheets then appointed Kristen Strand to the Commission and she accepted.



- 6.3. **Resolution 2021-11 – Development of an Economic Development Plan.** Mayor Sheets read Resolution 2021-11, an agreement between the City of Monroe and Mary Bosch of Marketek, for the development of an Economic Development Plan using part of a \$10,000 grant from Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments. There was no discussion and Mayor Sheets call for a motion. Councilor Ritch so moved and Councilor Cuthbertson seconded. There were no further questions and Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Winther: Yes; Councilor Knott: Yes; Councilor Lindner: Yes; Councilor Ritch: Yes; Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.4. **Resolution 2021-12 - Monroe Main Street Program.** Mayor Sheets read Resolution 2021-12, a resolution authorizing the City to engage with the Oregon Main Street program. Mayor Sheets noted there is no direct cost to the program but participants are expected to participate in meeting and forums with other Main Street Program entities. Mayor Sheets said he already participated in this year’s virtual event. There was no further discussion and Mayor Sheets call for a motion. Councilor Winther so moved and Councilor Knott seconded. There were no further questions and Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Winther: Yes; Councilor Knott: Yes; Councilor Lindner: Yes; Councilor Ritch: Yes; Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.5. **Tobacco Sales, licensing enforcement - SB 587.** CA Martinenko discussed Oregon Senate Bill 587 that requires the licensing of anyone who sells tobacco or tobacco related products. This affects two retailers in Monroe. The estimated cost of licensing is in the \$950 per year range through the State. Benton County has approached the City and said they can provide the service for about \$250 per year. They are requesting Council permission to move ahead with an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) between Benton County and the City of Monroe to provide licensing and enforcement. The IGA would have to come back to Council for approval before it went to effect. Councilor Ritch asked what the benefit is to the County. Staff replied that it helps them with economies of scale since they are also providing this service to other Cities in Benton County. Mayor Sheets then called for a vote to allow Benton County to proceed with the IGA. The vote was unanimous for proceeding with a draft IGA agreement with Benton County.
- 6.6. **Venue Change for City Meetings.** CA Martinenko mentioned that all future City meetings will be held at the library instead of the current location on Commercial Street. For structural and space issues due to COVID, the current meeting room will be turned into City Hall and staff space.
- 6.7. **Process for Delinquent Utility Bills.** CA Martinenko described the growing list of delinquent utility bills that now amount to one-half of one month’s utility revenue. The first step will be a mailing, separate from the utility bills, describing resources available to help with paying utility bills. In January, the ordinance committee is requested to convene for consolidating and updating our water utility billing ordinance. This will



result in a uniform ordinance so both staff and citizens' have a clear understanding of what is expected. At the end of January, the City will start to add late charges. There will be a notice in the December billing that late charges are coming with the next bill. In February, staff will start to contact delinquent accounts directly with utility assistance program information and offering a payment plan. By March, staff will need to make a decision with the remaining delinquent accounts in terms of collections, liens, or water shutoff. However, staff emphasized the goal is to have people current on their payments and not go through the process of collections or turning off water unless it is the last resort.

- 6.8. Mayor Sheets reminded Council of the Monroe Community Bizarre the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving. In addition, Mayor Sheets said he will be doing ribbon cutting for two new businesses, Christmas Junction and the Alpine Resale Shop and encouraged Councilors to attend.

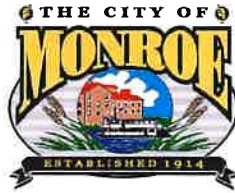
7. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- 7.1. CA Martinenko gave updates on codification, Garbage RFP, Property and Equipment Sales. Codification is nearing completion and the City should have the finished product by the next Council meeting. The Ordinance Committee will need to reconvene to start the amendments based on the reviews that were previously done. The Garbage RFP and property sales are still in process. For Equipment Sales, the larger equipment does not currently run. It may be possible to have a technician out to get the equipment started or tell us what it needs to run. This may return a larger premium at sale. Council agreed this is a good path to take. CA Martinenko indicated the Belchamber property would be the first to place for sale. A letter will be sent to Laurie O'Hare to ensure all the haunted house items are removed.

8. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

8.1. **Committee Reports:**

- **Budget.** Councilor Rich said the Committee does not meet until next year and may start off with a supplemental budget.
- **Parks and Facilities.** Councilor Cuthbertson reported on a new fence for the Park host and updating the Parks Master Plan.
- **Economic Development Committee.** Mayor Sheets reported on the first committee meeting and the great ideas that were shared.
- **Beautification.** Mayor Sheets reported that Holiday pole banners were in process. There will be 15 banners with four different designs.
- **Community Engagement.** Councilor Knott said the committee is working on the food drive and commented on the many donations that have been contributed to date. She also mentioned that the light parade that will be held November 11th.



- Monroe Festival. Mayor Sheets said the committee set April 30, 2022 as the date for the festival. A pole to help name the festival has received 39 responses so far with “Monroe Arts and Wine Festival” being the top pick.
- Finance. Councilor Ritch commented on discussions about water bills and general fund transfers that were addressed earlier.
- Human Resources. Councilor Lindner reported the Committee is reviewing and updating the City Administrator’s position description and salary. In addition, the committee is reviewing the absence and time off policy, along with the administrative polices for the employee handbook.
- Public Works. CA Martinenko gave an update on pond discharge status.

8.2 **Councilor Comments:** Councilor Lindner thanked CA Martinenko for all his efforts and personal outlook on updating position descriptions based on needs rather than the person in the position.

8.3 **Mayor’s Comments.** Mayor Sheets mentioned he will be moving December meetings so the last two weeks are clear for the holidays.

8. **ADJOURN:** Mayor Sheets adjourned the meeting at 8:01 P.M.

Approved by Council Action on December 20, 2021.

Mayor Dan Sheets  Date: 12/20/2021

Attest: 

Steve Martinenko, City Recorder