



MONROE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

June 26, 2023

6:00 PM

Monroe Community Center

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

Pledge of Allegiance: Councilor Meyers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Sheets; Councilors: Cuthbertson, Lindner, Meyers, Ritch, Williams, Winther
Staff present: City Administrator Martinenko, Accounting Specialist Flora

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

Mayor Sheets moved an agenda item for the review and approval of City Park reservation request regarding the Jr. Dragons baseball team's alumni park event on Sunday, July 23. The request is for full use of the park and will include 2 to 3 concessions and the use of sound amplification. After brief discussion, Council approved the Park reservation unanimously.

3. **STAFF REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

3.1. **Sheriff's Report.** Sheriff Van Arsdall asked if there were questions about the monthly report. After brief discussion, the Sheriff talked about being at the City's First Responder's event in September and also Benton County Fair events in August. With no further questions, the Council thanked the Sheriff and his department for their work in Monroe.

3.2. **Ryan Vogt, Executive Director, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (COG)** presented their annual report. Mr. Vogt reflected on their activity with Meals on Wheels in Monroe, working with the South Benton Food Pantry, and extending the Veeran's Services officer to Monroe for regular monthly office hours and the Monroe Community Center. Additional work with broadband for underserved communities has been a highlight along with housing assistance. The COG is currently working on developing outreach assistance to communities for grant writing. The Council thanked Mr. Vogt for his work helping Monroe and small communities in the region.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA**

4.1. Council Winther asked about the line for multiple charges with a description of "placeholder." Accounting Specialist Flora replied those are for credit card purchases where the receipts have not yet been coded but the purchases are verified. Mayor Sheets then called for a motion to pass the consent agenda. Councilor Winther moved to pass the consent agenda including bills, financials, and minutes. Councilor Ritch seconded. Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Meyers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Cuthbertson: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Williams: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion carried



4.2. **City Administrator Report.** CA Martinenko reported on continuing work at the water plant fixing breakdowns including a regenerative blower, filtrate pump, and repacking one of the main water pump shafts. These are priority maintenance tasks so the plant can start working with both filters over the summer heavy water use months.

CA Martinenko discussed new hires for the office and public works and talked about the difficulty hiring a fully qualified person to run the water plant verses a person that has the capability to learn and can grow with the City. CA Martinenko also cited the need to provide separation of financial duties for the front office along with the need for backup of functions.

CA Martinenko continued with complaints about RV's, trailers and other personal property including basketball hoops on city streets, easements, and sidewalks. This is in addition to weed abatement. CA Martinenko emphasized the need to be consistent with all ordinance enforcement, so if one person is cited all similar violations are cited at the same time.

Mayor Sheets asked if there were questions. Councilor Williams asked about the reference to skids. CA Martinenko replied that each filtration unit in the water plant is pre-package on a frame the manufacture calls a skid and described the basic components that make up one filtration unit. Councilor Williams then asked about water capacity. CA Martinenko described how water use is predicted on a daily and weekly bases to run the plant for the target daily capacity. This amount varies throughout the year based on demand. In the summer months, the amount of water stored increases for fire safety purposes. CA Martinenko said the minimum required is three days of stored water, or 270,000 gallons, but around 360,000 gallons is the average storage.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING**

5.1. Mayor Sheets opened the public hearing for the fiscal year 2023-24 budget ay 6:50 P.M. and called for public comments. CA Martinenko briefly described the budget and the process used in the budget committee meetings. CA Martinenko also said a significant part of the budget this is the adoption of new water rates, which changed some of the numbers approved by the budget committee. The main change is hiring two staff at 30 hours rather than one full time water operator position. This changed the budget distributions for payroll throughout the budget. Councilor Lindner expressed concern over the smaller FTE for staff in General Administration. CA Martinenko replied this was due to distributing payroll costs through out the funds and that when added up, General Administration staff were at 1 FTE. CA Martinenko further explained that the USDA and the Auditor wanted each activity that receives revenue be reflected in a unique fund and costs distributed within that fund. CA Martinenko described a new reserve funds for the water revenue bond, water system Capital Improvement, and events. The water revenue bond is for the sole purpose of holding the last bond payment, the water system CIP is funding through an additional fee for water system improvements due to equipment obsolescence, and the event fee for City events in case expenses exceed revenue. This will require all events to have a Council approved budget. Council briefly discussed the budget process and felt their questions and concerns were answered. There was no one from the community present and no public comments. Mayor Sheets closed the public hearing at 7:08 P.M.



6. NEW BUSINESS

- 6.1. **Resolution 2023-12** – A resolution adopting approved City of Monroe Budget, imposing taxes and appropriating expenditures for the FY 2023-2024 Budget. Councilor Ritch moved to pass Resolution 2023-12 adopting the budget. Councilor Winther seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.2. **Resolution 2023-13** – A resolution declaring the City's election to receive state revenue sharing funds. Councilor Ritch moved to pass Resolution 2023-13 electing to receive state revenues. Councilor Winther seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.3. **Resolution 2023-14** – A resolution establishing a Water Revenue Bond Reserve Fund. CA Martinenko explained this fund is for the sole purpose of holding the last bond payment as required by the terms established by the USDA. Councilor Winther moved to pass Resolution 2023-14 establishing a water revenue reserve fund. Councilor Myers seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.4. **Resolution 2023-15** – A resolution establishing a Water System Capital Improvement Reserve Fund. CA Martinenko explained this reserve fund is to receive revenue from a new water rate fee for the purpose of capital improves for the water system that includes replacing worn out or obsolete equipment. Councilor Ritch moved to pass Resolution 2023-15 establishing a Water System Capital Improvement Reserve Fund. Councilor Winther seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.5. **Resolution 2023-16** – A resolution establishing a City Events Reserve Fund. CA Martinenko explained this reserve fund is to assist with City events with a Council approved budget. This is to cover situations where expenses exceed revenue at the end of the event. Councilor Ritch moved to pass Resolution 2023-16 establishing a City Events Reserve Fund. Councilor Lindner seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.6. **Resolution 2023-17** – A resolution setting utility rates and fees for FY 2023-2024. CA Martinenko recapped the rates discussion and highlighted the new rates are now charged by the gallon instead of a tier. This means that while rates increase with more consumption, moving into a higher tier is an incremental charge. The other significant change is lowering the base amount of water from 5,000 gallons to 1,000 gallons. The concept behind all the changes is to make the rate system more equitable rather than counting on only the customers with the highest water use to pay for the water produced. There was discussion about the rates at the high end of water use and the need to disincentivize use over 12,000 gallons per month. Councilor Winther wanted to



clarify the rate for 6,000 of use. CA Martinenko explained it would be the base charge of \$34.96 plus \$4 for the use between 1,000 and 5,000 gallons and \$9 for the remaining 1,000 gallons. CA Martinenko also explained there is an additional rate for multi-family units that average over 10,000 gallons per month. With the previous rate schedule, high use multifamily were charged the same as residential and skewed the rates for both residential and high use multifamily. This will result in a more equitable distribution. Councilor Myers moved to pass Resolution 2023-17 adopting new utility rates. Councilor Cuthbertson seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.

- 6.7. **Resolution 2023-18** – A resolution approving an IGA with Benton County for Law Enforcement Services. After brief discussion, Councilor Ritch moved to pass Resolution 2023-18 approving an IGA with Benton County for Law Enforcement Services. Councilor Cuthbertson seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.8. **Resolution 2023-19** – A resolution permitting limited camping at the City Park with a timeline for adopting an ordinance to comply with Oregon House Bill 3115. CA Martinenko explained the conversation with the City attorney who agreed the best course of action is for the Council to approve limited camping at the City Park since that process is already in the City ordinance and no other camping restrictions are in place. That would allow the City time to work on a more comprehensive ordinance but also comply with the provisions of HB 3115. Councilor Ritch moved to pass Resolution 2023-19 permitting limited camping at the City Park with a timeline for adopting an ordinance to comply with Oregon House Bill 3115. Councilor Winther seconded. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.
- 6.9. **Resolution 2023-20** – CA resolution accepting a \$8,000 check on behalf of the City of Monroe and transferring to the City Events Reserve Fund. CA Martinenko explained this resolution was not required since it was already incorporated in the budget.
- 6.10. **Memo for approval to purchase equipment for the Water Plant.** CA Martinenko requested Council approval to purchase replacement equipment for the filter systems. One item is a regenerative blower used for the backwash function and the other is a variable frequency drive (VFD) that controls the filtration pump. The latter is shutting down with heat and is preventing operation in one of the filters. The blower is to replace the spare that was used in the previous week. After discussion about the specifics of the equipment, Councilor Ritch moved to allow purchase of the regenerative blower and VFD. Councilor Meyers seconded with the amendment to make the purchase amount for both not-to exceed \$10,000. With no further discussion, Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Cuthbertson: Yes; Myers: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Williams: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion Carried.



- 6.11. **Historic Last Railroad Spike Marker Project Update.** Mayor Sheets talked about the recreation of the last spike at the Monroe Festival that was accomplished with generous donations from Albany and Eastern Railroad and expertly re-enacted by Monroe Public Works Lead Mark Murray using period equipment. Mayor Sheets commented the next step is to secure donations for a marker to be set in concrete over the location of the spike. Councilor Ritch also mentioned the need for an American Legion commemorative marker at the Monroe Community Center.
- 6.12. **Monroe Festival Post-Mortem.** Mayor Sheets discussed the Monroe Festival and Councilors commented on the great turnout and good weather. There were comments from the public missing the trolley and might explain the low visitor county at the library for the model train setup. Also, parking is a concern as it is for all events and the hot weather was not favorable for pets who needed water. There was discussion about parking and different options along with shaded areas for families with children. Councilor Cuthbertson commented on the need for transportation so event goers can see more of the City including the City Park and park in different areas of the City and have a way downtown.

7. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- 7.1. **Funding Options Updates for the Water Infrastructure Project.** Mayor Sheets announced the Legislature approved the \$1.3 million ask for water system improvements and is now waiting for the Governor's signature. CA Martinenko added that his next step is to work with Biz Oregon to apply for the remaining money required. At this point, the Community Development Block Grant is a good candidate and opens July 1st. The State money will require matching funds that is anticipated to come from System Development Charges.
- 7.2. **1135 Grant update.** CA Martinenko said the Corps completed their public comment period and received several positive and a few negative responses. The Corps internal tagged some items for further review but they are confident the project will be on the docket for funding in October. CA Martinenko said is continuing conversation with the Long Tom Watershed Council for water intake relocation grants and that the Watershed Council has a grant approved for the cost match portion of the construction phase for dam removal. Councilor Ritch asked about the current water intake pump and the need for a new pump in the water master plan. CA Martinenko replied the current pump works but is not optimal and needs to be replaced with a better intake system that allows the intake to work at all water levels.
- 7.3. **Economic Development Committee Update.** RARE student Chris Rivera presented his updates to Council that included extending his online surveys and describing the strategic framework for identifying and developing projects within the context of the development plan. The plan is extensive and will be presented to Council in July.



8. CITY EVENTS

8.1. Mayor Sheets updated Council on upcoming City events including Christmas in July on July 15, Taste of Tri-County Business Expo on July 19th and the First Responders Event in September. Councilor Cuthbertson commented that there should be an easy way for people to help sponsor or donate to events. Councilor Ritch added there might be a master sheet for each event with needed sponsors and amounts needed. Mayor Sheets reminded Council to check the City events calendar at <https://ci.monroe.or.us/administration/city-calendar/>

9. OTHER BUSINESS:

9.1. Mayor Sheets reminded Council of upcoming events and asked if there were any closing comments. Councilor Lindner asked to schedule an HR/Finance committee meeting.

10. ADJOURN: Mayor Sheets adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

Approved by Council Action on July 31, 2023

Mayor Dan Sheets

Date:

7/31/23

Attest:

Steve Martinenko, City Recorder