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## **AUMSVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

### **December 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Angelica Ceja called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Present in-person were Mayor Angelica Ceja, Councilors Nico Casarez, Della Seney, Katie Wallace, and Walter Wick. Council present via zoom: Councilor Douglas Cox. Council absent: Scott Lee. Staff present: City Administrator (CA) Ron Harding, Assistant Public Works Director (APWD) Matthew Etzel, Assistant City Administrator (ACA) Kirsti Pizzuto, and Office Assistant Celia Lemhouse. The meeting was video recorded to be released later.

**AGENDA APPROVAL:** Councilor Casarez moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilor Seney seconded. Council present voted unanimously to approve the agenda. Agenda approved.

**PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, & VISITORS:** CA Harding presented checks from the 2023 Corn Festival Proceeds to representatives from the service organizations that helped at this year's Corn Festival. As the service organizations accepted their checks, they expressed their thanks and told Council what the distributions meant to them.

Cascade School District, Aumsville Historic Society, Aumsville Exchange Club, Girl Scout Troop 10770, Girl Scout Troop 11890, Girl Scout Troop 31890, and Marion County Search and Rescue all received checks and presented a summary of how the money will help their organizations. \$18,000 in proceeds from the 2023 Corn Festival were distributed.

Santiam Service Integration Team also received a check but was absent from the council meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: None**

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Councilor Seney moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilor Casarez seconded the motion. Council present voted unanimously to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

#### **A) Pacific Corps Franchise Extension Hearing**

Mayor Ceja opened the Public Hearing at 7:27 PM.

CA Harding delivered the staff report for the public hearing. CA Harding explained that Council had previously extended the franchise the year prior, but there was no franchise lawyer on staff. The City has acquired a franchise lawyer and is currently in the process of renewing the franchise. CA Harding asked Council to approve the extension to preserve the Franchise through Ordinance 723.

Major Ceja closed the Public Hearing at 7:29 PM.

Major Ceja asked for a motion to approve the extension. Councilor Casarez moved to approve the first reading by title only of Ordinance 723, an ordinance extending the franchise granted to Pacific Corps doing business as Pacific Power via Ordinance 619 declaring an emergency as presented by staff. Councilor Seney seconded the motion. Council present voted unanimously to approve the ordinance. Motion passed.

Councilor Seney moved to approve the second reading by title only of Ordinance 723, an ordinance extending the franchise granted to Pacific Corps doing business as Pacific Power via Ordinance 619 declaring an emergency as presented by staff. Councilor Casarez seconded the motion. Council present voted unanimously. Motion passed.

**OLD BUSINESS: None**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A) Resolution 12-23 Adopting a Specific Policy for System Development Charge Calculations**

CA Harding explained the State of Oregon is trying to stimulate new affordable housing. House Bill 2984 is one such bill trying to incentivize redevelopment in the industrial corridor. Cities with populations over 10,000 must adopt a specific policy by December 31 of this year or these cities will be unable to charge system development charges for the redevelopment.

CA Harding urged Council to adopt this specific policy to protect Aumsville's system development charges as much as possible. System development charges help pay for State and Federally mandated infrastructure updates. CA Harding pointed to Council's policy of overall growth should pay for growth.

CA Harding explained cases where the State of Oregon adopted a new bill that reduced the population threshold of a previous bill from 10,000 to 2,500. Cities that did not adopt the previous bills are forced to comply without having the ability keep the benefits. CA Harding stated he felt it was safer to adopt the policy tonight so that Aumsville can maintain its growth should pay for growth policy as a cautionary adoption.

Mayor Ceja asked to clarify that passing this motion would allow Aumsville to keep charging FDCs as if Aumsville gets over a 10,000 population the City would have to absorb those costs and that it doesn't change what the city can charge.

CA Harding confirmed, and stated that it shows that Aumsville has a policy for when development comes into the community, they have to offset the impacts to the system by paying their fair share to the system.

Mayor Ceja asked for a motion. Councilor Casarez moved to approve Resolution 12-23 Adopting a Specific Policy for System Development Charges Calculations in connection with commercial to residential conversions as required by House Bill 2984 as presented by staff. Councilor Wick seconded. Council present voted unanimously to pass the motion. Motion passed.

### **B) RL Reimers Contract for Water Storage Tank & Pump Station Improvements**

APWD Etzel explained the City is still working on getting signatures from contractors and getting a few bond contracts for the water storage tank system contract. Once the City receives those, the contract will be reviewed by Westech and the city will execute the contracts should Council approve.

Councilor Seney motioned to approve the RL Reimers Contract for the Water Storage Tank & Pump Station Project as presented by staff. Councilor Wick seconded the motion. Council present voted unanimously to pass the motion. Motion passed.

### **C) Utility Rate Study – Recommendation to Award to FCS Group**

CA Harding explained that one of the biggest challenges Aumsville has faced was the new wastewater treatment facility. Staff have been able to acquire a little over 16 million dollars of the 28 million dollar project through grants, loan forgiveness, and saved money the City has been able to accumulate. CA Harding continued by saying there is going to be about 11 million dollars of low interest loans the city will have to take on. After the first of the year, the City will have to get one source of funding and, once the project is completed, the current USDA funding will kick in and provide for the long range funding of the project.

CA Harding recommended the City to hire a company that specializes in debt service rate studies for cities and utilities to be able to come to Council and show what a future rate will look like. This would allow for the Council and City to then communicate to the public what the rate increase will look like. CA Harding put out an informal request for proposals. CA Harding stated FCS was one of the companies that responded, and had a good reputation. CA Harding recommended to award a \$22,780 contract to FCS to complete the rate study that would encompass the rate payer study and the long term debt, as well as a comprehensive review of Aumsville's system.

FCS Representative Angela Sanchez was present via zoom to answer questions. FCS Representative Sanchez summarized FCS project proposal of creating a financial plan for the wastewater system and figuring out the best timing when each wastewater obligation comes due, what revenue comes due, and if there needs to be any utility rate adjustments for the community. FCS would leave a financial toolset for the City to monitor the rate path and plan for the future.

CA Harding urged Council to approve the motion as it would be a great communication tool the City could then use to distribute information about the project to the community.

Mayor Ceja summarized her understanding of what CA Harding was asking.

CA Harding confirmed Mayor Ceja's understanding and added it is important to have a group that specializes in it to talk about what a rate increase could look like.

Mayor Ceja asked for a motion. Councilor Casarez moved to approve the FCS Group Utility Rate Forecasting Proposal as presented by staff. Councilor Wick seconded the motion. Council presented voted unanimously to approve the motion. Motion passed.

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

CA Harding stated Saturday's Christmas in the Park event went well. CA Harding told Council that the City has received lots of positive feedback that the community had a great time. CA Harding also thanked volunteers for their time.

CA Harding presented the Police Report. CA Harding mentioned there has been an incident at the area schools today. When Aumsville officers were responding, one got into a vehicle accident and one of Aumsville Police Department cars was severely damaged. CA Harding did not believe the officer had any serious injuries, but had not received an update.

since the officer went to get checked out. The schools were dismissed early due to the incident, and it was believed to be a cyber threat that was launched on a lot of schools in the area. It was believed that none of the children were in any danger.

CA Harding continued to the Public Works report detailing how hard the Public Works staff have worked, and how limited the amount of staff Aumsville has. CA Harding explained that Public Works staff worked all week for the Christmas in the Park event and did a great job.

CA Harding moved to the System Development Charge report stating it is required by law to provide Council with a report detailing system development charge funds, what the City has spent throughout the year, and the balances.

CA Harding then introduced a temporary Office Assistant Celia Lemhouse, who is a new staff member. CA Harding then highlighted how good all City staff are doing.. CA Harding pointed to next year with having a Council appreciation potluck at the first meeting of the year with the Planning Commission. CA Harding stated that the City will have big contracts right after the first of the year the State of the City in the second meeting of the year.

### **MAYOR/COUNCIL REPORTS AND INITIATIVES:**

Councilor Seney reported SKATS is meeting in January after holding off adding Aumsville to the metropolitan transportation planning for two months. Councilor Seney stated there were disagreements on SKATS as to how the committee should vote, if it would be changed to populationally weighted or not.

Mayor Ceja said The City of Aumsville prepared and will send in a statement voicing its concerns over a change to weighted voting. Mayor Ceja then stated they will be attending the January SKATS meeting to express support.

Mayor Ceja presented the Mayor Report. Mayor Ceja volunteered at the Exchange Club's event Santa's Gift Shop where over 70 children shopped for presents for their parents. Mayor Ceja was invited to the elementary school to present to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders on how city government works. Mayor Ceja also helped with the Aumsville Santa visits on Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup>, and voiced her appreciation for all those involved. Mayor Ceja met with Blazer Industries, one of the biggest employers in town, and spoke about modular housing fund to help with low income housing. Mayor Ceja visited the school and met with the food and nutrition program. Mayor Ceja was enlightened on how much debt affected the community being able to feed children.

Mayor Ceja stated Council will be attending an open house with Congressman Salinas December 19<sup>th</sup>. Councilor Casarez will also be attending the open house.

Mayor Ceja stated staff put together a wonderful presentation that CA Harding and Major Ceja presented at the State of the Canyon. Mayor Ceja noticed all the cities have similar struggles.

Councilor Seney announced Bethel Baptist is opening the Aumsville Community Food Pantry at Bethel on January 11<sup>th</sup> at the Bethel Ministry Center, and there will be an open house January 9<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 PM. Councilor Seney stated there will be a dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony. The food pantry will be open the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month from 12-4 PM. The food pantry will add more Thursday's once they have enough food.

Mayor Ceja stated the food bank is a community food bank as it took several phone calls, networking, and planning to get it back up and running.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

Councilor Seney recognized CA Harding and ACA Pizzuto for earning their international city county manager certification and city administrator certification.

**CORRESPONDENCE: None**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: None**

Mayor Ceja adjourned the meeting without prejudice at 7:57 PM.

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Minutes unanimously approved by Council January 8, 2024.