

COLFAX CITY COUNCIL
August 16, 2021

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Retzer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

Guenthner, Christopherson, Mackleit, Miller, Kackman and Huntwork: Present. Golden: Absent. A motion was entered by Guenthner, seconded by Mackleit to excuse Kackman. Roll Call: All Yes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was entered by Guenthner, seconded by Kackman to approve the minutes from the January 19, 2021 Council meeting. Roll Call: All Yes.

GOOD OF THE CITY:

Mayor Retzer introduced Officer Chase Kurtz. Kurtz took his oath of office.

BILLS AND CLAIMS:

A motion was entered by Christopherson, seconded by Guenthner to approve all bills and claims as presented. Roll Call: All Yes.

CLAIMS	PAYROLL
6756-6758 Voided, 6759-6760, 6784-6795	6751-6755, 6761-6783 & EFT
\$14,549.59	\$92,144.60

GRAND TOTAL: \$106,694.19

NEW BUSINESS:

City Administrator/Finance Director Chris Mathis reported we have received the first installment of the American Rescue Plan money. They are still working out the parameters on how we can spend it. Cities are supposed to have a discussion and set policies on how they are going to spend the money. Mathis stated we will get half this year and the other half next year. If we are unable to properly spend the money we will have to return it to the state and then hopefully they can return it to the US Treasury. Mathis would like the council to start thinking about how we will spend it. Mathis has completed the paperwork for lost revenue calculations due to COVID, there are also infrastructure improvements we can make that are in line with the guidelines. Water and sewer infrastructure will fall into this, anything that helps battle the spread of COVID updating our park bathrooms and pool. Facilitating improvements to our communications, we used some of our CARES money on the new equipment to be able to have online meetings. We also pooled some CARES money with the county to help citizens with utility bills. The last time Mathis

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checked there are still funds available at Community Action to help citizens. Mathis encouraged the council to reach out to her if they have thoughts on where they would like to see the money go. As we go into budgeting we will be talking about proper uses for the funds with the councils input. As Mathis continues to receive information she will pass that on to the council.

Mackleit asked about how much funding we received.

Mathis answered we received just over \$400,000 this year and we will receive the same next year.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Administration:

Mathis stated we just went through our first Department of Retirement Audit in 20 years. It was very extensive and Kramlich did a lot of work getting information to them over several months. Tomorrow the council will be receiving an email with the final report. Mathis is currently arguing a couple of things on the report. Quite a few things that came up, probably from not being audited for so long, we weren't doing perfectly on our reporting. Moving hours from one month to another which is a lot of busy work getting that all cleaned up. There are going to be some financial ramifications, going back 7 years we had a part time firefighter work enough hours to be qualified for one of the plans. Normally police and fire are covered under LEOFF and the LEOFF booklet states if you are part time you are not covered. As we found out they do not qualify for LEOFF but they do qualify for the PERS plan, we are working out the final numbers but we will have financial responsibilities to pay into the retirement system for this person. Mathis is working with Madison at DRS on how many of those years at that part time position will actually qualify. Mathis will let the council know as things get finalized.

Christopherson asked why they waited 20 years to do audit.

Mathis stated that is a really good question, they told us they will be back in 5 years. In other places Mathis has worked the standard has been 10 years which is still a long time, you start doing something wrong you are doing it wrong for 10 years and not made aware of it. They didn't have a reason why they haven't been here for so long.

Christopherson thought they should bear some of that financial burden since they didn't audit for so long.

Mathis stated she is arguing strongly on some of the issues.

Retzer interjected that would be the common sense thing and logical thing but it is the state.

They won't really care who told who how to do it. Regardless it is what it is and whatever that amount is we would have paid it into the retirement system. It might me a little ugly and hard to set but it isn't like we wouldn't have had to pay it into the system already.

Kackman asked if the person was notified and if they are vested into the system. He also asked how do you calculate the money that would have been earned if the money would have been invested at the time. Kackman went on to say it appears there should be an amount of years they

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can go back. The right thing to do is calculate and pay into the system what the person is owed. We just have to fix it and move on.

Public Works:

Public Works Director Matt Hammer reported Whitman County has reached out to him regarding the Courthouse remodel. They will be renting space at the Warwick Building across Main Street for the duration of the extensive remodel. They would like to purchase a flashing crosswalk beacon to place at Island and Main Street. The county would purchase with the city installing it. Hammer stated this would be a permanent asset to the city. The grant the city received for the four already installed were at intersections where pedestrian accidents took place.

Hammer reported that as of last Thursday the public works had picked up 30 dead deer and today the crews spent over 4 hours picking up dead deer. Washington State Fish and Wildlife will send biologists down to run tests on the cause of so many deaths.

Hammer encourages citizens to call the city as soon as possible if they find a dead deer before the rotting process get too extensive. He also requested citizens try to drag the deer to the closest street.

MAYORS REPORT:

Retzer reported he is in the process of fixing the water fountain at Eells Park. He obtained volunteers and they are about 75% done. They had to repair the base, Retzer said it was close to unrepairable. Larry and Travis Harrison donated the time and labor. Retzer stated the city will pay for the parts and pieces needing replaced or repaired and the water line. The next step is to pressure wash before the sealant is sprayed on. It will take 4 gallons which will seal the rest of the cracks. They also tapped holes in the top so that water will properly drain after the season to prevent further damage. The project should be wrapped up in the next couple of weeks. Retzer would like to have a ribbon cutting for the fountain repair and the playground that was placed at Eells Park at the 150 year celebration next summer.

Kackman stated that is the phenomenal project and is glad to see it being repaired.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Retzer adjourned the meeting at 7:24p.m.


Jim Retzer, Mayor


Lynda Kramlich, City Clerk