



STUDY SESSION MINUTES

Tuesday September 25, 2018

1. Call to Order Time:6:00pm
2. New Business
 - A. Cemetery

Council Member Gourneau questioned how many hours were used in the cemetery this month. Gourneau questioned how many hours have been charged out there because he said that he went to a funeral on Friday and it looked bad. Michelle explained that they were very busy the last couple weeks with crack seal and they knew that the cemetery was being neglected in some aspects. Vera asked if they were still keeping logs of what they were doing and how much time was being used. Michelle explained that this is still the case and that they are keeping a log but it was all hands on deck for the crack seal. Council also asked who is in charge of the cemetery. It was explained that there is no one person in charge of the cemetery at this point but from here out maintenance will be the responsibility the public works/ waste water person. Mark stated that there are trees overgrown and headstones tipped over where they just mowed around instead of picking up the actual stone. There are trees down and overall disarray out there. Mark's main point was than someone needs to be in charge of that so that

there is someone accountable and more importantly to ensure that it is getting taken care of. Vera added that a former resident would like to get a group together to help clean the cemetery/parks or whatever the city needs help with.

B. Mabton Police Department

Mark wanted to talk about the Police Department. He stated that he was the one who was against going with the Sheriff's Department. We were supposed to have coverage a long time ago. He stated that we have one officer and he sees him much more than he sees the Sheriff's Office. If we have enough money to buy brand new cars for them then we should have enough money for a qualified chief and qualified officers. He says that if you look even our own police department is being tagged with graffiti etc. citizens and other cities see it. He feels that we should pull the contract and find our own people. They were supposed to be here in July and they just keep giving us the run around. They are trying to hire people because they are short staffed and they don't even have people to cover us. If they do not have someone here soon then we need to take a serious look at hiring a police department for ourselves.

Vera asked if we are legal without a police chief. City Attorney David stated that a chief is required for second class cities but we are a non-charter code city and we are not required to have a police chief. We do have an ordinance to allow for a police chief but this does not require us to do so.

Vera also inquired about a police officer's boot purchase. She wanted to know why he needs \$391 boots when soon they will be going to the Sheriff's Office. Michelle explained that this was part of his allowance and that this has exhausted his spending for the year.

C. State Auditor's Exit Conference

Michelle explained that we are in the close of the audit for the year. She stated that there would be a few findings as part of the Exit Conference. She stated that she was aware that they would be coming and most of them will be addressed as part of the budget retreat. The first was for misclassified funds; this does not mean they are missing but that they are in the wrong BARS Coding. The second was for being negative in three funds; this is also a three year trend that we need to discuss. The third finding was for a grant that we received being classified in the wrong month; we heard about this last year but it has to wait for this year because it happened in 2017. There was also a check that was withheld from a contractor that should have been issued on the spot.

Diana questioned where Laura's receipts were and why they have not been turned in. She was very adamant that this needs to be done. We are referring to receipts that happened in August and this is the end of September. She also questioned scrap metal sold to salvage and paid cash. Diana questioned why this was not done with a check nor have a receipt given. All council questioned why that was and said that this is not the way things should be done. There was much discussion on rather or not it was agreed to and if this surplus was approved through council or not. Mark inquired about what happens to things after they get surplus; he stated that they do approve it to be surplus but he would like a little more about where it goes after it's approved. Sophia agreed that she would like to know where it goes.

Diana also brought up the Yakima County Development Association. She stated that she thought that we should not do that. The Mayor stated that it is \$5000 over the course of five

years but they were able to get Grandview \$300,000 in grants. She says that the city does not have money for that right now. Sylvia interjected that this item is not on the agenda and not open for discussion right now.

3. Visitor Comments

We heard from Rosa Martinez of 414 Cedar St. here main concern is the stop by the Conoco gas station. She stated that twice this year she has watched for vehicles to stop at the intersection and she has seen at least twice where the truck blew through the stop sign and ignored the stop altogether. She said that her daughter has had the same experience. She said she also talked to the attendant in the gas station and said that this is very common at this intersection. The mayor explained that she already looked into it and DOT said that when they did their study they did not have anyone actually go through it while they were watching and it did not qualify for more attention at this time.

She also said that the alleys are very dirty and there was someone who is just throwing dog poop over the fence into the alley. Mark stated that code enforcement was the responsibility of the police department. The city can request but as far as enforcement the police department is the only one who can really do anything about it.

She also had a question why there were so many weeds out there at the Governor's Park. She stated that there is gravel where grass used to be; which she has no problem with but if there is going to be gravel then we need to be pulling the weeds out there. The Grace Todd Monument and you can't even see it is because overgrown with weeds. She says that the cemetery looks bad as well. She said overall it just looks like no one cares; if we need volunteers she said she is

happy to do so. The mayor did respond and say that the person with the spray license quit and no one is certified to spray at this time that is one of the major reasons for the disrepair. Rosa stated that for big weeds you need a shovel not spray but she understands that things happen and she feels they need to figure this problem out soon.

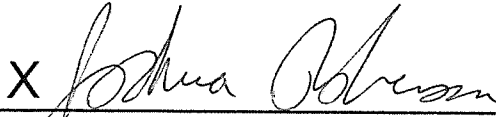
We also heard from Rachel Ruelas of 309 Maple St. wants to know why the volunteer is driving our city truck. She says that he is not a worker and states that he should not be driving a city truck. Mayor said that she was not aware that he was driving the equipment; she said that this issue was discussed when he asked to drive the Skid Steer. He was told at this time that because he was not a city employee he was not allowed to operate any city equipment.

Rachel also had one more comment about the Mabton Residents page on Facebook She said that she thought it was full of nothing but bad stuff and that it should be taken down. Council Member Sophia Sotelo runs that page and said that it is true that people say a lot of bad things on that page but it is meant for information and events and that she cannot stop people from saying what they feel. There was some exchange back and forth but ultimately it is up to the administrator of the page rather it stays up or not.


We also heard from Martha Gutierrez of 232 South St. went back to the receipts and asked if it was itemized. Michelle stated that typically if it is charged at Ace Hardware she will get an itemized receipt emailed to her but if they are paid on a charge card then the receipt will say what was purchased and that needs to be turned in to her. Mark stressed the point that there should be minimal purchasing happening this way. Vera also agreed if it is possible to purchase without a credit card then that is how it should be; it should happen that way every time.

4. Adjournment:

Time: 7:02pm

X 

Joshua Roberson
Deputy City Clerk

X 

Laura Vazquez
Mayor